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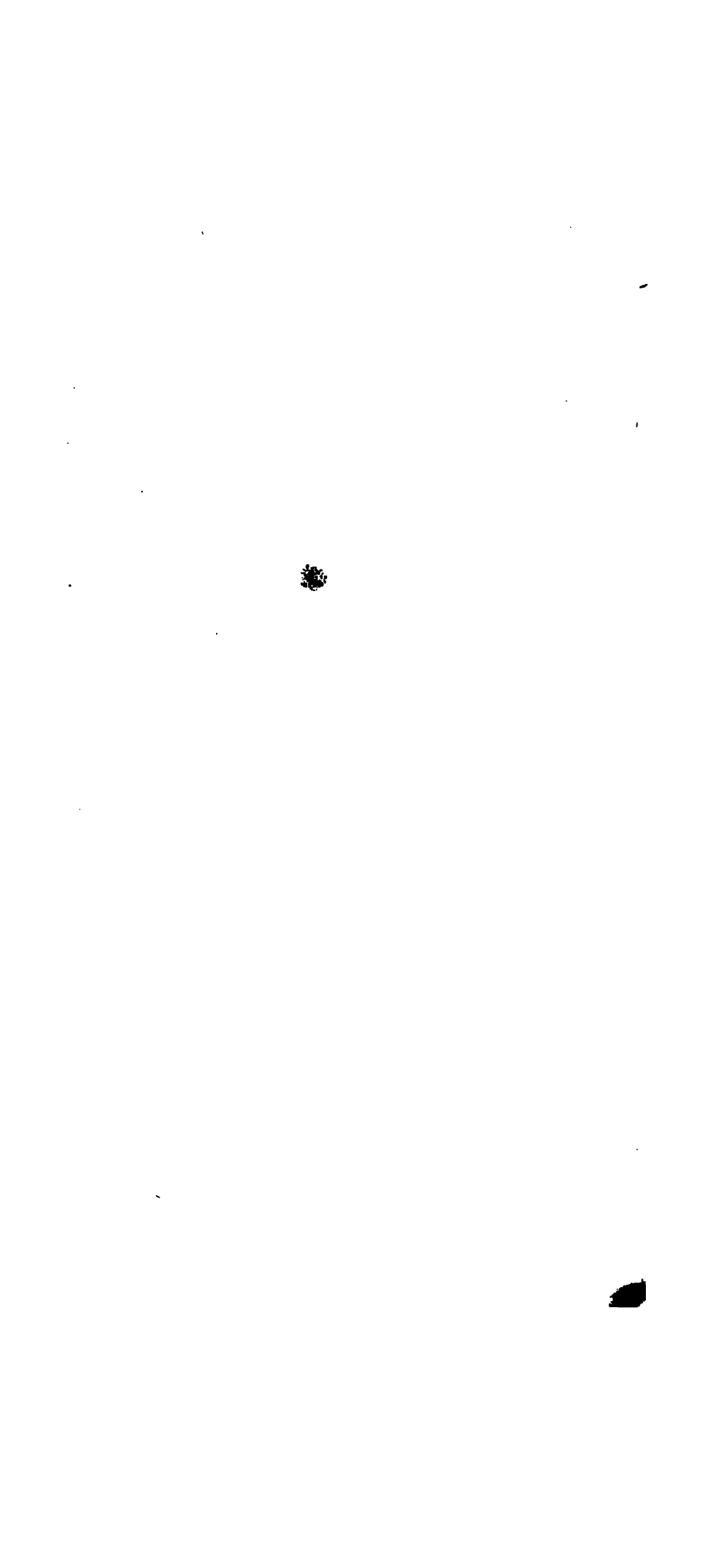


Aeshylus











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THE

A G A M E M N O N

OF



ÆSCHYLUS.

TRANSLATED BY

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

93, FLEET-STREET,

AND 13, WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL MALL.

1824.




Boy Way
2007
Korea

P R E F A C E.

THE following attempt, which is published only as a specimen, originated, at the suggestion of a friend, in an earnest, though perhaps audacious desire, to realize in our own language something more of the spirit of the original than can be found in the version of Potter. The author is fully aware of the inadequacy of translations in general, and that they are properly called *the wrong side of the tapestry*; which, applying to all, applies still more forcibly to translations from the ancient languages into the modern. The times, customs, religion, and manners, are changed; words which vibrated on the ear, and went straight to the heart of an Athenian, causing a thrill through their

crowded theatres, are known to us only by the dim light of lexicons, context, and glossaries; and even when understood, we search in vain for corresponding expressions in our own language. Words consecrated to religious usages, long since forgotten, become untranslatable: how, for instance, can we render such a word as *προστροφή*? (and yet, perhaps, the mere enunciation of that word created an awful sensation arising from the combined effects produced by the horror of murder, and the terrors of superstition) and an infinite number of others relating to laws, religion, and manners? How render idioms so different from our own? Without taking into consideration the great power and force of a language appertaining to the most refined and civilized people of the world, to which we are indebted for all our terms of civility and science, and in which one word would sometimes require for its translation a whole sentence of a modern language, as, for instance, *ἐπιχαρπεναιία*, ‘a disposition to feel pleasure at the misfortunes of others;’ which makes a sen-



tence, and constitutes a maxim in Rochefaucault: ‘Il y a toujours dans le malheur d’autrui quelque chose qui ne nous deplait pas.’¹ The mechanism also of the ancient languages is so much more perfect, being without the *signs* of inflexion and declension, those necessary supports of ruder and more unfinished dialects: the building,² to use their own expression, composed of fewer, but grander, and more comprehensive materials (*ἀμαξιαῖα ῥήματα*, words which would fill a cart), presents a front of Cyclopiian architecture, built for perpetuity; whilst modern writers are compelled to raise their edifices with act of parliament brick. Madame de Staël, in

¹ Lord Bacon (Essays) has beautifully touched on this disposition: ‘There is a natural malignity, for there be that in their nature do not affect the good of others.’

² Every one knows our Milton’s ‘Build the lofty rhyme,’ which he borrowed from Aristophanes’ *Frogs*, ‘Ἄλλ’ ὦ πρῶτος τῶν Ἑλλήνων πυργώσας ῥήματα σεμνὰ, and from Antipater’s Epigram in the *Anthologia*, ‘Ὁ τραγικὸν φῶνημα καὶ ὀφρυόεσσαν αἰοδὴν Πυργώσας σίεαρῃ πρῶτος ἐν εὐεπίῃ, both which passages refer to Æschylus; but what is more applicable to my present meaning, is a passage in Dionys. Hal. *περὶ συνθ. ὀνομ.* in which he seriously compares the work of the composer to that of the builder, in a studied comparison.

her beautiful little work of *Corinne*, has very happily characterized the style of writing of the ancients : ' C'est ainsi que la poésie antique ne dessinait que les grandes masses, et laissait à la pensée de l'auditeur à remplir les intervalles, à suppléer les développemens : en tous genres, nous autres modernes nous disons trop.' I cite this passage as a very profound and characteristic description of the genius of Greek poetry; the principle laid down in which observation must explain, once for all, the immeasurable distance that there must be between an ancient original and a modern translation; that is, not only the difference between the genius of writers, but the still greater difference between the genius of languages and ages. The Greek poetry pleased, and was imposing in its simplicity and nakedness : it has a charm perfectly impossible to be conveyed to those who have not read it in the original, and are not thoroughly imbued with it ; whereas an attempt at the same simplicity in an uncongenial and less powerful language, in a less poetical age

and country, would produce only a displeasing effect, pretty nearly what would be produced by the exhibition of a modern *beau*, stript of his clothes, by the side of the naked beauties of Antinous, Adonis, or Apollo. Hence translators of these works run always between two rocks; hence Pope is censured for too much embroidery, whilst Cowper is generally disliked for an unpleasing, and almost deformed nudity. However, it may be said of the former, that he has produced the finest specimen imaginable of that species of translation; whereas it may be doubted whether the latter was qualified by nature to do justice to the other and more difficult style; whether the mild and amiable author of the *Sofa* were not better calculated to blow the postman's horn, entering a country village, than the trumpet of Mars, shrouded in tempests, blowing to battle from the topmost towers of Ilium.

But to return to our subject: the inversions also of the ancient languages admitted of a

greater scope for the management of a skilful artist in presenting his images in whatever form, order, or point of view was most suited to his purpose; on which topic Dion. Hal. *περὶ συνθ. ἀν.* dwells much, and elucidates at large the importance of the collocation of words, insisting that it is of more consequence than their selection; and giving examples from the first authors to prove that the whole character of style would change with the change of the position of the words.¹

¹ It must be acknowledged that the two passages from Homer; the one:

Οἱ δ' ἔχον ὥς τε τάλαντα γυνὴ χερσὶν ἀληθῆς
Ἦτε σταθμὸν ἔχουσα καὶ εἶριον ἀμφὶς ἀνέλκει.

and the other:

Ὡς δ' πρόσθ' ἵππων καὶ δίφρου κεῖτο ταυνοθεῖς
Βεβρυχώς, κόνιος δεδραγμένος αἵματοέσσης.

altered by Dion. Hal. for the sake of example, merely as to the position, without the change of one word, produce a miserable effect.

How beautifully Thucydides puts before our eyes the long and winding course of a great river descending from the mountains, and flowing through a large champaign country; its sweeps, and the lake that it forms; without one word expressive of length or of winding, but by the

Those languages also admitted of a greater variety of tropes, figures, and metaphors, (some of which, such, for instance, as hypallage,¹

mere collocation of the words, and, as it were, the flow and sinuosity of the sentence! See Dem. Phal. *περὶ ἑρμηνείας*, who, by way of illustration, destroys the vivid picture, and makes the long-outstretched landscape vanish by a subdivision of the sentence.

¹ Of this figure, almost inexplicable to a mere English reader, the pages of the tragic poets abound with examples. In this play, 148 (Blomfield's edition) *Νείκεων τέκτονα σόμφυτον* is an hypallage: it might have been written, without the figure, *συμφύτων*, but there is no one but must see the greater force of the figure. I am sorry to see, in the excellent edition of Hippolytus, by Professor Monk, this figure misunderstood; where, in line 67, for *Ναίσις εὐπατέρειαν αὐλάν* he substitutes *Ναίσις εὐπατέρει' ἀν' αὐλάν*. *Ναίω δν' αὐλάν* no tragedian ever used. *Ευπατέρειαν αὐλάν* is precisely the *καλλίπαιδα σέφανον* of Euripides, in the *Hercules Furens*, the *καλλιπαρθένου δέξης*, and the *ψαλίοις τετραδάμοσι* of the same author in the *Phoenissæ*, and the *ἀμερόκοιτοι βλαχαὶ σμικρῶν τεκέων* in the *Cyclops*. In that terrific passage of the sacking of a town, in the 'Seven against Thebes,' a double hypallage occurs. *Βλαχαὶ δ' αἱματόεσσαι τῶν ἐπιμασιδίων Ἀρτιτρεφεῖς βρέμονται*. But to return to this passage of the Hippolytus, MSS. and editions vary as to the reading of *ναίσις* or *ναίστε*, but all with one consent read *εὐπατέρειαν*. In an evil hour, and without his usual discernment, did Valcknaër object to this reading, making at the same time the

though so frequent in the Greek tragedians, are yet unknown to modern languages) which gave a spring and soar to the wings of poets. From its infinite variety and richness, its plastic nature and the capacity of its compounds, the language accommodated itself to all varieties of natural talent, supplying compound epithets for the dithyrambics,¹ and metaphors for the tragedians, and equally answered to the buskined magnificence of Æschylus, the forensic subtlety of Euripides, and the soft and voluptuous colouring of Chæremon.² The style of each great

trite remark, that *εὐπατέρεια* was an epithet of Diana. Why so it is, and so it is used here; but by hypallage it is coupled with *αἰλᾶν*. So is *τετραβάμοσιν* an epithet of horses, and not of bridles; and yet Euripides joins it to *ψαλλοῖς* by hypallage. The advocates of this alteration might as well read *τετραβάμονα* in the Phœnissæ.

¹ See Arist. Poet. 37.

² What can be more glowing or picturesque than the passage in this poet's *Œneus*, describing a party of young damsels found asleep in a beautiful grove by moonlight? The partial display of their charms, seen by the soft light of the moon, and contrasted with the dark shade of the scenery, forms a most lovely and picturesque image. Of the same tender description is a passage where Apollonius Rhodius has brought together in one view the most soft

master kept aloof from that of another, and afforded to the public an infinite variety of

and delicate subjects nature and art could supply; where a young girl is represented on her balcony, with joy painted on her face, looking at a full and beautiful moon through a muslin veil, held up to catch its beams.

But now I am on the subject of Chæremon, I may be permitted, by the way, to restore a corrupt reading in his play of the Centaur, which stands thus in Schweighæuser's Athenæus:

Ἐνθεν μὲν αὐτῶν εἰς ἀπείρονα στρατον
Ἀνθέων δλόχων ἐστράτευσαν ἡδοναῖς,

where the word *δλόχων* is evidently corrupt, and contrary to metre and sense. Schweighæuser is very unfortunate in his conjecture, *ἀρτιλόχων* (a dactyl in the second place), and Fiorillo in his *ἀκρολόγων*. I read *ἀλόγγων* (without spears), an epithet which much heightens the beauty of the description, and prettily qualifies the metaphor. After representing a field of flowers like an army in array, a description admirably adapted to represent their numbers and their thickness, the poet, by the subsequent limitation, removes what is foreign from his subject, the bristling of spears, and restores to his flowers their innocence and their harmlessness. This manner of qualifying bold metaphors is very common in the Greek tragedians. See Arist. Poet. 35. *περὶ μεταφορᾶς*. Προσαγορεύσαντα τι ἄλλότριον, ἀποφῆσαι τῶν οἰκείων τι· οἷον εἰ τὴν ἀσπίδα εἴποι φιάλην μὲν Ἄρως, ἀλλ' αἶονον.

In the very pretty elegiacs of Hermesianax in Athen. xiii. there occur two lines extremely corrupt; which stand thus in Schweighæuser's edition:

amusement. Of this contrast of styles, the *Frogs* of Aristophanes presents us with a most delightful and entertaining specimen in the ludicrous

Οἷω δ' ἐχλίηνεν ὃν ἔξοχον ἔχρην πολλῶν
Ἀνθρώπων εἶναι Σωκράτη ἐν σοφίῃ.

Read

Οἷον δ' ἐχλίηνεν ὃν ἔξοχον ἔχρη' Ἀπόλλων
Ἀνθρώπων, &c. &c.

Compare Apoll. Rhod. ii. 456.

Τοῖς ὁ γέρων πάντεσσιν, ὅτις καὶ ἀφανρὸς ἰκοίτο,
Ἐχραεν ἐνδυκείως.

The reader will, I hope, forgive me for attempting to restore another passage from the *Phineus* of Æschylus, in Athen. x. 421, which is read thus in Schweighaeuser's edition:

Καὶ ψευδόδειπνα πολλὰ μαργώσης γνάθου
Ἐρυσαν οἷον στόματος ἐν πρώτῃ χαρᾷ.

It is evident that this is a description of *Phineus* at table, and the *Harpys* tearing away the meat from his mouth. The common reading is *ἐρυσίας οἷον*, which approaches nearer what I conceive to be the true reading, *ἐρρύσιαζον*. 'Ρυσιδίζω, pigneror, aliquid prehendo, violenter id mihi vindicans; unde sensus generalior, 'vi prehendo.' Eur. Ion. 523. Ἀψομαι κοῦ ρυσιδίζω; ubi verbum ρυσιάζω, 'violenter prehendo,' opponitur τῷ ἄπτομαι, 'simpliciter tangere.' Æsch. Supp. 420. Μηδ' ἴδης μ' ἐξ ἐδρᾶν Πολυθέων ρυσιασθεῖσαν, Nec cernas me à sedibus multorum Deorum violenter raptam. Ibid. 605. Κάρρυσιδιστους, ξύν τ' ἀσυλῖα βροτῶν, Non violenter captas. Casaubon, Schweighaeuser, and others, have made unfortunate conjectures on this passage.

contention between *Æschylus* and *Euripides*, between the *high-crested cavalier* diction of the one and the *slender filings and scrapings* of the tongue of the other. In short, no two nearly contemporary poets of our own country could afford so striking a contrast, which must be ascribed not merely to the difference of their geniuses, but also to the great scope and versatility of their *language*. The most unskilful auditor of Athens might safely, on the recital even of one line, pronounce from which of the two poets it proceeded.

These remarks naturally arise as objections to translations from the learned languages ; and it must be admitted that translations in general are but enjoyments at second hand, and that the wit and genius of great writers, particularly of poets, are untransfusible and untransplantable ; and that there is a certain subtle gas about them which evaporates in the process of transfusion.

Yet as the question now is, not as to the

inadequacy of translations in general, but as to the relative merit of such performances, it may be remarked that while the two great epics of antiquity have been rendered in our own language by some of the greatest geniuses of earlier and more modern times, the Gawin Douglasses, the Chapmans, the Popes, and the Drydens,¹ the few remains come down to us of the no less celebrated Greek tragedians have not been equally fortunate; and with the exception of Gascoyne, whose *Phœnissæ* is partly an original composition, partly a close and very spirited translation, these master-pieces have never been attempted except nearly in our own times: and of those who have attempted them, general opinion is disposed to think but indifferently of Franklin and Wodhull *in toto*, and of Potter in his versions of Sophocles and Euripides, though inclined to make an exception in favour of his *Æschylus*. This exception appeared to the

¹ The long list of the translators of Virgil, beginning with Gawin Douglas, closes in the late elegant and classical version of the *Æneis* by the Rev. Dr. Symmons.

author of the present attempt as unfounded, or as arising rather out of the nature of the original, the beauties of which were of too transcendent a nature to be wholly obscured, than from any great merit in the translator.

The present translator is fully aware of his own deficiency, and is doubtful whether, with the best intentions in the world, he has succeeded in advancing one step beyond him whom he condemns, if he has retouched even one line with effect, or made it one shade nearer the colour of the original. The only advantage of which perhaps this attempt can boast, is, that it is a more faithful transcript, and that the numerous errors, totally subversive of the sense, to be met with in Potter, are avoided here. All that the reader can depend upon will be accuracy and correctness in rendering controverted passages, mistaken not only by Potter, but by others of much greater erudition. The present translator has striven to be as literal as possible, though not always with success; and he has,

he is afraid, from his own inability, often fallen into languor and diffuseness. In his few notes he has avoided as much as possible all the rocks and shoals of verbal criticism, wishing to make his readers (though sometimes perhaps taken within view of them) yet glide by them as easily as possible, in order only to show them the beauty of the scenery, and the grand and delicious landscapes this poet affords. For the merit of the translation being the essence of the question, and the work being intended mostly for the benefit of English readers, the author will not encumber his few notes with any unnecessary display of quotation, or discussion of various readings, unless where it shall be absolutely indispensable for the illustration of difficult and controverted passages: and he hopes the reader will believe that any animadversions upon the errors of Potter or others¹ are not

¹ Frequent mention occurs in my notes of Dr. Blomfield's edition, which could not be avoided, from respect to the authority of the editor, as well as the merit of the work. Though I have had the misfortune to differ from that celebrated scholar in some instances, and have expressed

occasioned by ostentation, or a wish to detract from the fame of a respectable and elegant writer, who has the merit of being the first and the only translator of *Æschylus*; but that they arise naturally from the subject, and that they could not have been avoided in an attempt to illustrate the text, and to vindicate his own version. For, to use the words of *Plutarch* in one of his *Ethical Essays*, abounding in good sense and justness of observation, the translator is fully sensible that *ἀνιανοῦ ὄντος ἄλλως καὶ μόλις ἀνεκτοῦ τοῦ τῶν πλήσιον ἐλέγχου, καὶ δεομένου πολλῆς εὐλασίας, ὁ δὲ ἀδοξίας ἐτέρου δόξαν αὐτῷ θηρώμενος, ἐπαχθὴς παντάπασι καὶ φορτικὸς ἐστίν, ὡς ἐνευδοκιμεῖν ἀσχημονοῦσιν ἄλλαις βουλόμενος*—and he hopes also not to deserve the character given by *Longinus* to *Timæus*, that he was *Ἀλλοτριῶν ἀμαρτημάτων ἐλεγκτικώτατος, ἰδίῳ δὲ ἀνεπαίσθητος*.

my dissent with candor, yet I must profess my obligations to him for the assistance as well as pleasure I have derived from his valuable edition.

The reader, perhaps, may not be sorry to see the analysis of this play by Schlegel, in his eloquent lectures on Dramatic Literature, Black's Translation, p. 96.

‘In Agamemnon it was the intention of Æschylus to exhibit to us a sudden fall from the highest pinnacle of prosperity and fame into the abyss of ruin. The prince, the hero, the general of the whole of the Greeks, in the very moment when he has succeeded in concluding the most glorious action, the destruction of Troy, the fame of which is to be re-echoed from the mouths of the greatest poets of all ages, on entering the threshold of his house, after which he has long sighed, is strangled amidst the unsuspected preparations for a festival, according to the expression of Homer, ‘like an ox in the stall,’ strangled by his faithless wife; her unworthy seducer takes possession of his throne, and the children are consigned to banishment; or to hopeless servitude.

With the view of giving greater effect to this dreadful alteration of fortune, the poet has previously thrown a splendour over the destruction of Troy. He has done this, in the first half of the piece, in a manner peculiar to himself, which, however singular, must be allowed to be impressive in the extreme, and to lay fast hold of the imagination. It is of importance to Clytemnestra not to be surprised by the arrival of her husband; she has therefore arranged an uninterrupted series of signal fires from Troy to Mycenæ to announce to her that great event. The piece commences with the speech of a watchman, who supplicates the Gods for a release from his toils; as for ten long years he has been exposed to the cold dews of night, has witnessed the various changes of the stars, and looked in vain for the expected signal; at the same time he laments in secret the internal ruin of the royal house. At this moment he sees the blaze of the long-wished-for fires, and hastens to announce it to his mistress. A chorus of aged persons appears, and

in their songs they trace back the Trojan war, throughout all its eventful changes of fortune, from its first origin, and recount all the prophecies relating to it, and the sacrifice of Iphigenia, at the expense of which the voyage of the Greeks was purchased. Clytemnestra declares the joyful cause of the sacrifice which she orders, and the herald, Talthybius, immediately makes his appearance, who, as an eye-witness, announces the drama of the conquered and plundered city consigned as a prey to the flames, the joy of the victors, and the glory of their leader. He displays with reluctance, as if unwilling to shade the brilliancy of his picture, the subsequent misfortunes of the Greeks, their dispersion, and the shipwreck suffered by many of them—an immediate symptom of the wrath of the Gods. We easily see how little the unity of place was observed by the poet, and that he rather avails himself of the prerogative of his mental dominion over the powers of nature, and adds wings to the circling hours in their course towards their

dreadful goal. Agamemnon now comes, borne in a sort of triumphal procession ; and seated in another car, laden with booty, follows Cassandra, his prisoner of war, and mistress, according to the privilege of the heroes of those days. Clytemnestra greets him with hypocritical joy and veneration ; she orders her slaves to cover the ground with the most costly embroideries of purple, that it might not be touched by the foot of the conqueror. Agamemnon, with sage moderation, refuses to receive an honour due only to the Gods ; at last he yields to her invitations, and enters the house. The Chorus then begins to utter dark forebodings. Clytemnestra returns to allure Cassandra to her destruction by the art of soft persuasion. The latter remains dumb and motionless ; but the queen is hardly gone, when, seized with a prophetic rage, she breaks out into the most perplexing lamentations ; afterwards unveils her prophecies more distinctly to the Chorus : she sees in her mind all the enormities which have been perpetrated in that house : the repast of

Thyestes, which the sun refused to look on; the shadows of the dilacerated children—appear to her on the battlements of the palace. She also sees the death prepared for her master; and, although horror-struck at the atrocious spectacle, as if seized with an overpowering fury, she rushes into the house to meet her inevitable death: we then hear behind the scenes the sighs of the dying Agamemnon. The palace opens: Clytemnestra stands beside the body of her king and husband—an undaunted criminal, who not only confesses the deed, but boasts of it as a just requital for Agamemnon's ambitious sacrifice of Iphigenia. The jealousy towards Cassandra, and the criminal union with the unworthy Ægisthus, which is first disclosed after the completion of the murder, towards the conclusion of the piece, are motives which she throws entirely into the back-ground, and hardly touches on: this was necessary to preserve the dignity of the subject. But Clytemnestra would have been improperly portrayed as a weak woman seduced from her

duty ; she appeared with the features of that heroic age, so rich in bloody catastrophes, in which all the passions were violent, and in which, both in good and evil, men exceeded the ordinary standard of later and more puny ages. What is so revolting, what affords such a deep proof of the degeneracy of human nature, as the spectacle of horrid crimes conceived in a pusillanimous bosom ? When such crimes are to be portrayed by the poet, he must neither endeavour to embellish them, nor to mitigate our horror and aversion. The consequence which is thus given to the sacrifice of Iphigenia has this particular advantage ; that it keeps within some bounds our discontent at the fall of Agamemnon. He cannot be pronounced wholly innocent ; an earlier crime recoils on his own head ; and besides, according to the religious idea of the ancients, an old curse hung over his house : Ægisthus, the contriver of his destruction, is a son of that very Thyestes on whom his father Atreus took such an unnatural

revenge ; and this fatal connexion is conveyed to our minds in the most vivid manner by the Chorus, and more especially by the prophecies of Cassandra.'

THE ARGUMENT.

FROM THE GREEK.

AGAMEMNON, taking his departure for Ilion, made a promise to Clytemnestra, that if he took that city he would signify the event to her the same day by beacon signal: consequently Clytemnestra stationed a man, whom she hired to be on the look out, to watch the promised signal; who, as soon as he saw it, made his report. She sends for a number of the elders of the city, of whom the Chorus is composed, to tell them of the promised signal having been seen. On hearing the intelligence, they sing a pæan, or song of triumph. Not long after Talthybius arrives, and gives an account of what had happened on the voyage home: Agamemnon then makes his appearance, advancing in a chariot drawn by mules, and followed by another chariot, also drawn by mules, in which were the spoils of war, and the captive Cassandra. He passes on, and enters into the house

in company with Clytemnestra; but Cassandra, before she enters the palace, is seized with the prophetic inspiration, and predicts her own death and that of Agamemnon, and the murder of his mother by Orestes, and rushes in furiously like one going to die, having cast away her *insignia* as a prophetess. This part of the play is much admired as full of horror and intense pathos. The conduct of Æschylus is singular in this respect, that he makes Agamemnon be killed on the stage. As to Cassandra, without describing her death, the dramatist shows her lying dead. He has also introduced Ægisthus and Clytemnestra justifying themselves on the score of the murder; the one on account of the murder of Iphigenia, and the other on account of the atrocious conduct of Atreus to his father Thyestes.

The play was acted in the archonship of Philocles, in the second year of the 80th Olympiad, Xenocles of Aphidnæ being the Choregus.

AGAMEMNON.

B



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGAMEMNON, *king of Mycenæ*¹ (*here called Argos*).

ÆGISTHUS, *first-cousin to Agamemnon*.

CLYTEMNESTRA, *wife of Agamemnon, sister of Helen*.

CASSANDRA, *daughter of Priam, a captive princess*.

HERALD.

WATCHMAN.

CHORUS OF ARGIVE ELDERS.

¹ It is remarkable that the portals of this very ancient city, surmounted by lions, as described by Pausanias, are still in existence; a remnant of that Cyclopian architecture, which is still to be seen in the walls of Tiryns, and a proof of the ancient power and civilization of Greece anterior to the records of Mæonian song.

AGAMEMNON.

WATCHMAN.

FOR ever thus? O keep me not, ye Gods,
For ever thus, fix'd in the lonely tower
Of Atreus' palace, from whose height I gaze
O'erwatch'd and weary, like a night-dog still
Fix'd to my post: meanwhile the rolling year
Moves on, and I my wakeful vigils keep
By the cold star-light sheen of spangled skies.
The pole is studded o'er; above the rest
Flame the bright rulers of the midnight hour;
Who shed an influence on us mortal men,
And change our seasons as they roll along.
Now my eyes watch to see th' appointed signal,
The fire in the horizon, whose red dawn
Will spread the downfall of proud Ilion's towers

Swifter than noisy fame or rumouring tongues :
 For so I do interpret the command,¹
 And read her thoughts who gave it, haughty soul,
 Our queen, a man in counsel; meanwhile here,
 Standing or walking, through the night I ply,
 Or snatch uneasy rest on pallet stretch'd,
 Sprinkled by dews, unvisited by dreams;
 For Fear keeps watching, lest I close my eyes
 Outright, or nodding gravitate to sleep.
 Meanwhile it pleases me by fits to pipe,
 Or sing some roundelay; for song has charms
 To pass dull time, and wheedle drowsy sleep :
 Then sad thoughts cloud me, and past times recur,
 And gloomy recollections of this house,
 Changed, oh! how changed since first I knew these walls,
 When all was order, and due service glad !

¹ A few words may perhaps be required in vindication of this version, as a late very learned editor has changed the reading into ἑλπιζον, an old reading of Robortelli and the Venetian MS. I have kept the common reading ἐλπίζω, which signifies νομίζω, and the watchman here meaning to speak positively uses the doubting word ἐλπίζω or νομίζω, 'I think,' just as the Americans use the word 'I guess,' though intending a greater degree of positiveness than the word would seem to imply. Ἐλπίζω for νομίζω. Eur. Ion. 348. Θῆρας σφετὸν δόστηνον ἐλπίζει κτελεῖν. Eur. Hipp. 97. Ἡ κἀν θείοισι ταῦτον ἐλπίζεις τόδε; Potter has very properly censured Stanley for his mistake in rendering Ἀνδροβουλον, 'viro insidiantem;' but has himself fallen into a greater error in rendering it 'thinking of her lord.' The meaning very clearly is, as I have rendered it, 'a man in counsel,' 'a manly-minded woman.' Sophocl. in Stob. tit. lxxiii.

Κατ' ὄρφανὸν γὰρ εἶκον ἀνδρόφρων γυνή.

But may the night-star of good news appear,
The darkling fire ; good news to them and me,
A happy riddance of my nightly toils.

[*Beacon is seen.*

O hail, thou lamp of darkness ! in the night
Shedding the splendour of diurnal beams,
Bringing to Argos jubilee and joy,
And many a choir with thy eventful light.

Io, Io !

Quick with this news to Agamemnon's queen,
That, from her bed quick rising, through the house
She may her holy orisons begin,
With loud acclaim and Orthian minstrelsy,
To greet this beacon ; if indeed the town
Of Troy be taken, as this fire announces.
Strike up the prelude ! I will lead the dance,
And be the first among the merry throng ;
For I shall now put down upon the board ¹

¹ Τὰ δισκοτῶν γὰρ εἰς πεισόντα θήσομαι. In the interpretation of this passage Schutz has made two errors ; one, in rendering πεισόντα ' lapsa,' another in coupling εἰς with θήσομαι. Εἰς is generally used with τίθεμαι in a general sense, but not in a game of dice, at least not in this passage, nor in the one quoted by Dr. Blomfield from Sophocles apud Stob. tit. cviii. Στίργειν δὲ τὰμπεισόντα καὶ θέσθαι πρέπει, nor in the one quoted from Plato de Repub. 10, 604. ὥσπερ ἐν κύβων πτόσει πρὸς τὰ πεπτώκοτα τίθεσθαι τὰ πράγματα, which two last words Dr. Blomfield, as well as Musgrave, omitted in citing the passage, though they should have been cited as forming a material part of the phrase.

The lucky fortunes of my master's house,
From the good throw this torch-light watch has made.
Thrice six the main! Ay, ay, a lucky throw;
And all my watching turns out well at last.
But O for his arrival! O this hand
Held out to touch my much-loved monarch's hand!
Hush! for the rest I'm silent; a great seal
Closes my lips: could it but find a voice,
The house itself, the very walls would speak on't
Distinct. So far to those who're in the secret;
To those who are not, I'm as dumb as Lethe.

[*Exit* WATCHMAN.]

Enter CHORUS.

CHORUS.

Nine years are past, and now the tenth
Rolls on apace,
Since the chiefs of Atreus' race,
Priam's antagonists,
Each with his sceptre graced, each on his throne
Seated by Jove, firm yoke of warrior kings,
Led from this shore their martial train,
A thousand ships, which spread the main,
The equipage and soldiery of Greece,
Clanging as they went afar
The loud embattled cry of war;
Like vultures, who have lost their cradled young,
The callow nurslings of their aerie steep,
In mazy melancholy sweep
With their wings' oary steerage, wheel around
Their desolated beds,
Mourning apart in deep untrodden glades: ¹

¹ So I have rendered *ἐκπατίους ἀλγεσι*, literally, 'mourning out of the paths, mourning in unfrequented and untrodden places,' which appears more natural and poetical, as well as more correct, than the tortuous explanation of the Scholiast, adopted by Heath, Dr. Blomfield, and Stanley. The Scho-

But he who sits supreme,
 Apollo, Pan, or Jove,
 Lists to the wailing of the birds above,
 Each piercing woful scream,
 And sends Erinnyes on the felon's heels,
 The after-punisher of outrage past:

liast asserts that *ἱκπατοῖς* is put for *ἱκπατίων*, and that the epithet, though formally agreeing with *ἄλγεσι*, yet really applies to *παῖδων*. Admitting the hypallage, yet the word *ἱκπατίων* could not mean 'sublatorium,' as Stanley has rendered it, whereas the sense I have given it is the natural and easy one. The verb *ἱκπατίω* is used by Diogenes Laërtius to describe the philosopher Epimenides abstracting himself from society, and going into a wilderness in quest of simples. *Ἐκπάτιον ἄλγος* then is 'a mourning in a wilderness.' Potter has avoided the word, and lost the image.

The expression in this passage of *Πόνον ἑρταλχων ὀλισσάντες* is absurdly understood by Potter and others as equivalent to the English phrase 'losing their pains,' which is refuted by the epithet *δαιμονιότηρ*. *Πόνον ἑρταλχων* means 'the young birds themselves, the tender object of the care of their parents' (so forcible and comprehensive is the Greek language in the hands of a poet). In short, it means, by a bold figure, what would be expressed in common Greek thus; *ὀλίσσαντες τοὺς ἑρταλχους ἰφ' οἷς πεποιηκότες εἰεν*. Euripides, *Hercules Fur.* 1039. has an exactly parallel passage: *Ὁ δ' ὥς τις ὄρνις ἄπτερον καταστάνων Ὠδῶα τέκνων*; that is, in prose, *τέκνα ἄπτερα δι' ἃ ὠδῶας τετληκὼς εἶη*. Spenser, whether from imitation, or more probably from poetical coincidence, elegantly uses the same figure in speaking of a hind deprived of her young.

'Right sorrowfully mourning her bereaved cares.'

It is really mortifying to see a fine passage so ill-used: Musgrave is the least delinquent, who would read *Γόνον* for *Πόνον*, though that would be to take a plume from the poet: but one cannot help feeling angry with Stanley, Potter, and Dr. Blomfield for rendering *ὀλισσάντες πόνον ἑρταλχων δαιμονιότηρ* 'losing their pains in guarding the beds of their young,' instead of 'losing their unfledged and bed-reposing cares.' What great poet, instead of positively and directly stating such a calamity, would state it thus by circumlocution, and

So Atreus' sons, 'gainst Alexander false,
 Sends Jove the Hospitable, King of Kings,
 Preparing store of struggles fierce
 All along the tented field,
 Fought for the fair twice-ravish'd maid :
 Many a limb-relaxing stour
 In battle's heavy noontide hour,
 Limbs with labour overspent,
 Staggering knees in conflict bent
 On the dusty floor of Mars,
 Onsets loud, and shiv'ring spears,
 While Greeks alike and Trojans toil :
 Now all this rage and fierce turmoil,
 All goes e'en now by will of Destiny,
 And Fate must end it, howsoe'er it be ;
 For vain are tears and mortal cries,
 And the drink-off'rer's sacrifice,
 To soothe th' inexorable shrines
 Where the dim taper never shines.
 But we, time-stricken with dishonour'd age,
 Too weak in that brave muster to engage,

as it were by induction ? as if losing their pains was a loss to be considered when they had lost their young themselves ! What a style of writing ! Besides *δειμιοντήρη* does not mean *guarding* a bed, but *keeping* a bed, or lying in a bed, and is here applied to the young ones lying in their nest. And this is the very sense it is used in in line 1424 of this play, and this is the very sense Hesychius gives the word, referring to this very passage.

Stay here behind,
Incumbent on our staves,
That help our childish strength along :
For the soft marrow of young tender years
Is weak like age, unfit for works of Mars ;
And so pale Eld, whose sap is dead,
And its leaves already shed,
Now on three legs, its race near run,
Moves like a shadow in the sun.

But thou, what news, what tidings hast thou heard,
Daughter of Tyndarus, our royal queen ?
What message fair has won thy ear,
To make thee thus the busy rites prepare,
And all the solemn stir of sacrifice ?
See ! all the altars of our city Gods,
The pow'rs of Heav'n above, and Hell below,
With heap'd oblations blazing glow.
On each side see the flames arise,
Sloping upwards to the skies,
Whilst the royal censer pours
Of liquid oil its amber stores,
Dewing soft the holy fire,
And candied cakes in odorous fumes expire. ¹

¹ I am aware I owe an apology for the laxity of the version of this whole passage. Πίλωνες is a sort of cake used in sacrifice, the particular form and

What means all this? communicate, unfold
 Whate'er is fitting to be told:
 Cure me of evil-thoughted care,
 Which one while makes my soul despair,
 And one while fair-eyed Hope, between
 This light of sacrifices seen,

ingredients of which being now unknown to us, we must content ourselves with its generic name. It appears to me, that amongst the Attic writers the proper and primary sense of this controverted word is a *sacrificial cake*. The passage cited by Musgrave on Eur. Ion. 225. from Pausanias' Arcad. 237. is very explicit. Πέμματα δὲ ἐπιχώρια ἐπὶ τοῦ βωμοῦ καθήγγισαν, ἃ πελάνους καλοῦσιν ἔτι καὶ ἐς ἡμᾶς Ἀθηναῖοι. This appears the proper sense: so it is used in Eur. Ion. 225. Εἰ μὴν ἰθύσατε πέλανον πρὸ δόμων. So in Helen. 1333. Βώμοις τ' ἄφλεκτοι πέλανοι. So Ion. 707. Καλλίφρογα πέλανον. The fragment of Eur. Erechth. cited by Suidas, v. Σελήναι (though obscure in itself) is sufficiently clear to illustrate this meaning. Καὶ μοι πολλὸν γὰρ πέλανον ἐκπέμπει δόμων, φράσσον σελήνας τάσδε πυρήνου χλόης, where Suidas τάσδε σελήνας (a sort of round cake, called a *moon*) πελάνους εἶρηκεν Εὐριπίδης ἐν Ἐρεχθίδι. This being its proper, original, and plain meaning, it is occasionally used by the poets in a secondary or metaphorical sense, as when Æschylus says πέλανος αἵματοςταγῆς, 'a cake of blood,' or Euripides ἀφρόδῃ πέλανον, 'a cake or lump of foam.' It is obvious that these are highly poetical and metaphorical expressions, and are not to be taken as the strict sense of the word. A good deal of confusion has arisen amongst commentators from not distinguishing between the primary and secondary acceptation of this word.

There is however besides a difficulty in this passage as to the regimen of the word *πελάνη*, which the Scholiast perceived, who proposed to understand *καμφομένον*, the poet describing the sudden bustle of the sacrifice, and the *sacrificial cakes*, the *πέλανοι*, carrying out of the palace (*μυκάθεν*) to feed the flames. Or *πελάνη*, perhaps, depends on *φαρμασσομένη*, as *παρηγοραῖς* does, and *σελάνη* χρύσεατος is no more than 'oil,' as *πελάνη* μελίσσης is 'honey,' in a fragment of the Cressæ in Athen. xiv. 604. Καὶ πεπτά καὶ κρεττὰ (a sort of *εὐφρόνη* or *plaisir*) τῆς ξουδοπτέρου πελάνη μελίσσης ἀφρόνως δοδυμένα.

Drives away heart-eating pain,
And restless sad surmising vain.

The song, from heav'n descending,
Breathes inspiration's swell,
And prompts my soul to tell¹
What on the road the chiefs befell,
Victorious omen sending;
What sights of augury were seen
By the two-throned Achæan kings,
Leading the host of Grecia's flower;
The warlike eagle tow'ring in the air,
To lead them to the Trojan land,
With sword and spear, and venging hand.
When unto the kings of men
Two kings of birds in apparition came;
One all in plumes of raven black,
One with his pennons white behind;
Seen beside the palace gate,
On the spear-hand, and by the seat of state,²

¹ "Ετι γὰρ θεόθεν κατακνήσει Παιδῶ μόλπᾶν Ἄλκην σύμφυτον αἰὸν. So Dr. Blomfield has most happily emended this passage, with only a change in accents, which produces a substantial effect. I have been too lax in my version.

² Potter has been guilty of an omission in not rendering this particularity of description *χερὶς ἐκ δορυπέλου*, literally, 'on the spear-hand,' that is, 'the right,' as we say in English 'the sword-arm.' Dr. Blomfield observes that

Where they had borne a mother hare,¹
 Loaded with her brood within,
 Who had run her last that day,
 And stood with outspread wings devouring of their prey.

Schneider was the first who pointed out this meaning, which is sufficiently plain of itself. Milton, *Par. Lost*, iv.

As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.

Ἐν ἰδρυσιν I fear I have not rendered correctly by 'seat of state.' I suspect it has a technical meaning, drawn from the science of augury, and refers to the perch of the eagles.

¹ In vindication of my own and Potter's version of this plain passage I must express my regret at Dr. Blomfield having recalled the old and corrupt reading of Aldus, Robortelli, and Turnebus (ἱρικύματα), which Stephens altered into ἱρικύμονα, which reading has maintained its place ever since. The whole passage stands thus in the Glasgow Edition.

Βοσκόμενοι λαγίαν, ἱρικύμονα φέρματι, γίγναν
 Βλαβίττα λαισθίων δρόμων.

Nor is there a plainer passage in the whole play, viz. 'Devouring a hare, or one of hare kind, very big with young,—overtaken in her last course.' But Dr. Blomfield reads Βοσκόμενοι λαγίαν, ἱρικύματα φέρματα, γίγναν, Βλαβίττα λαισθίων δρόμων. Βλαβίττα, says he, agrees with φέρματα: a very good concord in grammar, but a most strange and miraculous one in sense. What! eat the hare's embryos, overtaken in their last course? Who ever heard of embryos running a race? Λαγίαν γίγναν is periphrastically used for λαγόν, with which word (understood) the participle βλαβίττα agrees, agreeably to the observation of Porson on Hecuba, 293: 'Cum enim personam circumlocutione significant Græci, quàm citissimè ad ipsam personam revertuntur. Homerus igitur nunquam ait: Βή Ἡρακληίδη Ἡπερ, sed Βή Ἡρακληίδη Ὀσπερ. The poet is speaking of the hare pursued, overtaken, and devoured: the pregnancy of the animal (which has given birth to such fatal blunders) is introduced only as an additional circumstance, and a descriptive peculiarity aggravating compassion, agreeably to the humane superstition of the ancients, which in this amiable peculiarity resembled the humanity to animals incul-

Ælinon! Ælinon! ¹ ring the peal,
And pray for conquest and for weal.

The prophet of the Host, with holy view
Glancing o'er all the martial train,
The warlike sons of Atreus twain
Hid in the wings of those devourers knew,
And thus portentous spoke:
' In time this inroad shall o'erthrow
Troy and Priam's royal state;
Black-hair'd Moera ² there shall stand,
Sacker of the lofty town,
And all within the mighty towers,
Beasts and people, sweep away.

cated by the Jewish law, of which Clemens Alex. speaks, Strom. ii. *Ἀντιμῶν γὰρ καὶ ὅσα τῶν ζώων κυοφορεῖ, ὁ νομὸς οὐκ ἐπιτρέπει, ἄχρις ἂν ἀποτέκη, σφαγιάζεσθαι, μακρόθεν ἐπισχὼν τὴν εὐχέριαν τῶν εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἀδικούντων.*

¹ I have thought right to keep this word as the tune or burden of a mournful song, probably originating from the lamentations of the Muse over her son Linus. So *ἵουλος* was the name of the reapers' song, from the word *ἵουλος* signifying 'sheaves,' constituting the burden of it, the reapers singing *πλεῖστον οὔλον, οὔλον ἴμ, ἵουλον ἴσι*. So the bakers, millers, weavers, &c. had their appropriate songs, as may be seen in Athenæus, xiv. 619. So there were also songs called Eriphanis, from the sad fate of the poetess Eriphanis, recorded in Clearchus' Erotics, of which we have a very pretty fragment, much in the style of Cervantes' Lucinda: and also one called Calyca, from the tragic romance of a nymph of the same name, ennobled by the muse of Stesichorus.

² The goddess Fate. Though this word may sound strange to English ears, yet I am informed that to this day at Athens the *Mœræ* under that name have certain rites paid to them.

O but, ye Gods! let no supernal woe,
 Bursting from heaven with thickest gloom,
 Hang night upon the mighty bridle-bits
 Of forged steel, that gleam o'er all the field,
 Moving embattled toward the towers of Troy;
 For Dian chaste, if I areed aright,
 Gives signs of grudge against your house,
 Wroth with Jove's dogs, yclad in mighty wings,
 Who ate the hare, and in her all her brood;
 She hates the eagle's feast, imbrued with woful blood.

Ælinon! Ælinon! ring the peal,

And pray for conquest and for weal.

But may the beauteous virgin queen,¹ who loves
 Youngling lions, fierce and fell,
 And all who in the forest dwell,

¹ I translate this passage as it stands in the Glasgow Edition, in the usual and natural way of understanding it, as the invocation of Calchas to Diana; only for *αἰρεῖ* I would read *αἰτῇ*, which Hesychius explains ἀπλῆρωτα. Schutz very properly saw the difficulty in the word *αἰρεῖ*, which he consequently changed to *αἰτῶ*. In short, in this word, and in *τόσον περ*, lies the difficulty of the passage, and not in *δρόσους*, or *ἀίπτοις*.

I cannot conceive why so many commentators should have quarrelled with *ἀίπτοις*, but to those who do, the old editions present another very good reading, *ἀέλπτοις*, acknowledged by Hesychius (who explains it δεινοῖς ἰσχυροῖς), and which I have followed in my version. But *ἀίπτοις* is the reading of one MS. (the Medicean), and of the Scholiast, as appears from his explanation, τοῖς ἔπεισθαι μητρὶ οὐ δυναμένοις, 'not being able to follow their mother.' This meaning is adopted by Schutz and Dr. Butler, who are

Cubs and whelps, and sucking fawns,
 Of all the beasts who range the lawns,
 May she fulfil these doubtful signs of joy,
 Which from the eagle's apparition come,
 Partly right well, but partly mix'd with woe.
 Pæan Ieïan! to thee I cry: '
 Ah! may no angry storms deform the sky!

charged with absurdity by Dr. Blomfield for employing such an epithet, he says, towards *unborn factuses*. The charge of absurdity, however, does not lie at their door, but at that of Dr. Blomfield, who has committed a great oversight in ascribing such a meaning to the word *Δρόους*, in spite of all the authorities to the contrary to be found in his own glossary, all of which, Hesychius, Etymologicum Magnum, and Scholiast, render the word 'the young whelps.' To say then that the young whelps were too weak to follow their mother, is a natural description, and no absurdity at all.

I cannot conceive why Dr. Blomfield should have taken this whole passage out of the mouth of Calchas, and put it into that of the Chorus, where its effect is truly miserable, and where, if it has any meaning at all, it is that of a side scene-direction in a modern German play.

I had almost forgotten to notice Potter's mistake, who, following his blind guide Pauw, transforms these young lions into 'spangled dew-drops of the lawn.'

¹ Calchas here, to avert the coming evils, which he sees with a prophet's eye, invokes Apollo under the name of Pæan Ieïan: *Ἰήιος* a paronym from the word *ἴη*, an invocation, used solemnly three times in libations. The Greek writers, with one consent, prose and verse, give it a wrong etymology and meaning, being ignorant of any language but their own, deriving it from *ἴημι*, 'jaculor,' and deduce it from the supposed words of Latona to her son Apollo, when about to encounter the serpent, *ἴη, παῖ*, 'strike, son.' But the word is undoubtedly the Hebrew *יָה* jah. See Diod. Sic. i. 59. *παρὰ δὲ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις Μωσῆν τὸν ἱεὺς επικαλούμενον Θεόν*, and Wesseling's learned note, where he accuses Cyril of want of faith in omitting this word in the citation of this passage in his controversy with Julian. Macrobius, Saturn. xviii. still more clearly gives this identical title to Apollo: '*Oraculum Apollinis Clarii*;

Nor Goddess ere they sail, yon ships detain
With slow, long-working tempests on the main,
Calling aloud—' Give me some other rite,
' Some other blood to drink ;
' Slay me that fair two-footed beast.'
O horrid victim, which no mouth can taste !
Ha ! from the dropping blood arises rife
Discord and consanguineous strife,
And woman's deadly rage, with black'ning face behind.

Homeward returning see her go,
And sit alone in sullen woe ;
And child-avenging Anger waits,
Guileful and horrid at the palace gates.'

Such were the words that from old Calchas' mouth
Spoke promise good in loud prophetic tone ;
And, taught by birds that cross'd the royal march,
Sung the loud destinies of the royal house.

aliud quoque nomen Soli adjicitur, qui in iisdem sacris versibus inter cætera vocatur Iao.' The probability is, that all the names of the Grecian Gods are Oriental (as, for instance, the two names of Athènè and Minerva come from two Hebrew words, signifying ' to spin'), and the Greeks in vain seek their derivation within the pale of their own language. ' Pæan' probably means ' Healer,' as Macrobius : ' Virgines Vestales ita indigetant Apollo Medice, Apollo Pæan.'

And now in unison with him,
 Ælinon! Ælinon! ring the peal,
 And pray for conquest and for weal.

Jove! I invoke thee by the name of Jove,¹
 If so that title thou dost love,
 Whoe'er thou art, mysterious One above:
 Reflecting much, nought can I find but thee,
 Thou mighty Pow'r! so let my soul be free,
 Nor dread misnomer of thy deity;
 For he, thy predecessor great,
 All arm'd with giant confidence elate,

¹ For the clearer understanding this passage by the English reader, it is merely necessary to observe that the ancients in their solemn invocations to their Gods were extremely superstitious, and fearful of giving offence by using wrong names, or misapplying their titles. So Orpheus, *περὶ Διῶν*, 720. *μανάρων ἄρρητον ἑκάστου Οὐνομα, τέρονται γὰρ ἐπὶ καὶ τις ἐν τελέτῃσι Μυστικὸν ἀειδῆσαι ἐπώνυμον οὐρανίωνων.* Expressions of a similar feeling, and in the mouth of a Christian, occur in an ancient panegyric of Constantine, quoted by Gibbon, vol. iii. c. 20. 'Summe rerum Sator, cujus tot nomina sunt quot linguas gentium esse voluisti, quem enim te ipse dici velis, scire non possumus.' The Chorus here is invoking Jupiter, now the Supreme Power, Uranus and Saturn being dispossessed. This is the plain sense of the passage, as the Scholiast, Dr. Blomfield, and I understand it; and Potter, making it, as he calls it, 'a general reflection,' has wandered wide into the regions of English pindaricks. But I ought to remark, that the line I have rendered 'all arm'd with giant confidence elate,' is a poor substitute for the original, *Παμμάχῳ θράσει βρόνῳ*, which presents the magnificent, but to us incongruous image, of a giant all steeled for battle, and bearing his boldness like a tree bearing its blossoms.

Has been of yore,
 And is no more.
 And He, who second came,
 Is but a name,
 By champion victor in the fight
 Vanquish'd and turn'd to flight:
 But ready be the Pæan loud to ring,
 And Jove's triumphal praises sing,
 (Wise is the man who adores th' Eternal King)
 Jove the great God,
 Who show'd us mortals wisdom's road,
 And who by sapient rule
 Has made adversity instruction's school.
 Fear draws the curtains oft at night,
 And makes the sleeper think of woe,
 By coward conscience struck
 In midnight's secret hour;
 And those, who would not learn before,
 Have learnt perforce great Virtue's power,
 Gift of the Gods, who sit enthroned above
 On azure blazing thrones and seats of living might.

But the great chieftain of the Argive fleet
 Stood with his soul collected and attemper'd firm
 To Fortune's veering breath,
 Silent, nor oped his mouth to blame the seer;

What time at Aulis' reflux flood,
On Chalcis' strand,
The Grecian host was bound,
And their proud navy staid,
Which made their heroes droop, and all their stores to
fail :

And winds disastrous vex'd the waves,
Issuing from Strymon's northern caves,
Bringing unwelcome rest and odious holiday
To mighty chieftains with their cuirass braced ;
And famine to beleaguer'd hosts
In the fretting harbour pent,
With tossing ships, and cables' strain.

But when the prophet now, with horrid clang,
In midst of the assembled chieftains rang
So dread a peal, and told the woful means
- To stay the ravings of the winter storm,
And Dian's horrid mystery stood reveal'd ;
The sons of Atreus, starting from their thrones,
Dash'd to the ground their sceptres, nor withheld
The bursting tears that dew'd their warrior cheeks ;
And thus exclaiming spoke the elder king :
 ' O heavy, fatal doom ! to disobey !
 O heavy, fatal doom ! my child to slay,

My child, the idol treasure of my house !
 Must I, her father, all bedabbled o'er
 In streaming rivers of her virgin gore,
 Stand by the altar with polluted hands ?

O woe ! woe ! woe !

Where shall I turn me ? How forego
 The kings, the ships, the leagued chieftain bands ?
 They're not her parents ; ¹ they may call aloud
 For the dire rite to smooth the stormy flood,
 All fierce and thirsty for a virgin's blood.'

Thus as he bent his neck beneath the yoke
 Of dire necessity, and champ'd the curb,
 Horror, impiety, and deadly thoughts,
 Roll'd on his soul like tempests from the deep,
 Through all the veering compass of his mind :
 Such thoughts as mortal men hereafter rue ²

¹ Casaubon, Vossius, Pearson, Schutz, Ruhnken, have all attempted this passage but unsuccessfully ; I have therefore rendered it after the common reading, which also the very learned Dr. Blomfield has preserved in his text.

² Dr. Blomfield renders τότεν τὸ παντότολμον φρονεῖν μετέγνω 'audacia sapientiam destruit : ' φρονεῖν certainly may mean 'sapientia,' as in Herc. Fur. δ' τ' ὄλβος ἢ τ' εὐτυχία φρονεῖν βροτοῦς ἐξάγεται, but how can μετέγνω mean 'destruit ?' The more obvious sense seems to be 'after all his fluctuations, μετέγνω, he changed his mind, (εἰς) τὸ παντότολμον φρονεῖν, into that state to harbour thoughts the most nefarious.' But in that construction βροτοῖς

When they have dared their worst,
 And shake with terror as they look behind.
 Unhappy Frenzy is the spring of Woe,
 Counsel-distracting Frenzy first inspires
 A horrid boldness in the breasts she fires.
 Thus then Atrides, in that baleful mood,
 Dared with his daughter's sacrifice complete
 The first piation of the wind-bound fleet,
 And speed War's iron muster with her blood,
 In cause of Helen, perjured dame.
 Mailed chiefs, whose bosoms burn
 For battle, heard in silence stern
 Cries that call'd a father's name,
 And set at naught pray'rs, cries, and tears,
 And her sweet virgin life and blooming years.
 Now when the solemn prayer was said,
 The father gave the dire command
 To the priestly band,
 Men with strong hands and ruthless force,
 To lift from earth that maiden fair,
 Where she had sunk in dumb despair,

must be changed into *βροτοῖς*, and made the commencement of the following sentence, where it is unnecessary to the sense, and in my opinion very frigid. I have therefore adhered to the old reading, *τόθι τὸ παντόττολμον φρονεῖν μετέγνω* (scilicet *δὲ νῦν*) *βροτοῖς* 'penituit mortales audaciæ.'

And lay with robes all cover'd round,¹
 Hush'd in a swoon upon the ground,²
 And bear her to the altar dread,
 Like a young fawn or mountain kid :
 Then round her beauteous mouth to tie
 Dumb sullen bands to stop her cry,
 Lest aught of an unholy sound
 Be heard to breathe those altars round,
 Which on the monarch's house might hang a deadly
 spell.

Now as she stood, and her descending veil,³
 Let down in clouds of saffron, touch'd the ground,
 The priests, and all the sacrificers round,

¹ Greek *πέπλοισι περιπετῇ*, 'fallen and involved in her robes.' Lucian, *Pseudol.* uses this word metaphorically: *εἰ καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα λυπήσειν ἔμελλε τοῖς περιπετιῦν ἰσομένους τῇ χολῇ τῶν ἰάμβων αὐτοῦ.*

² Potter has entirely omitted the fine description which is conveyed in the word *προνωπῇ*, 'fallen on the ground in a swoon,' as it is used in the *Alcestes*, 141. where see Heath's note referring to this passage.

³ It is curious to observe how the same manners are still preserved in the East after such a lapse of time. See in Hughes's *Travels* the affecting description of the execution of a young Turkish girl, who was brought out veiled, and unveiled just before the barbarous execution (stoning) took place. Her face displayed great beauty, and her crime was an intrigue with a Christian, who refused to marry her and turn Turk. How Abreschius and Stanley could have so misconceived the passage as to render *Κρόκου βαφὰς χέουσα* 'pouring out her blood,' when it should be 'dropping her veil,' I cannot conceive; and still less how the last three lines *ἀγνᾷ δ' ἀταύρωτος αὐδᾷ*, &c. could have been so misunderstood by Pauw, Potter, and even Herman. I have given the meaning, which is sufficiently plain from the *tense* of the word

All felt the melting beams that came,
 With softest pity wing'd, shot from her lovely eyes.
 Like some imagined pictured maid she stood,
 So beauteous look'd she, seeming as she would
 Speak, yet still mute: though oft her father's halls
 Magnificent among,
 She, now so mute, had sung
 Full many a lovely air,
 In maiden beauty, fresh and fair;
 And with the warbled music of her voice
 Made all his joyous bowers still more rejoice;
 While feast, and sacrifice, and choral song,
 Led the glad hours of lengthen'd day along.
 I saw not, say not, what did thence ensue,
 But Calchas' lore will surely turn out true.

ἱέρμα, which signifies a continuity of action, and relates to her daily habits in the house of her father, and not, as they would have it, to *one act* of devotion at the altar. *Αἰδῶ* also (which Herman would change into *αἰδῶ*), as well as *αἰδῶν*, completely bear out the meaning I have given it. These commentators seem to have been ignorant of the poet's intention, who raises interest, pity, and horror to the height by presenting Iphigenia at the altar, and unveiling her preparatory to her barbarous execution, on which point of the picture he dwells, contrasting her present situation with her former happiness, her cheerfulness, her songs, and the festivities in the house of her father. In this passage we may remark the epithet *καλλίπρωρον*, 'beautiful faced.' So *prowe* is used in old English for 'face,' Rowley's *Battle of Hastings*, l. 108.

'And hit Sir Dallie Naibor on the *prowe*.'

Hes. Lex. Ἀντίπρωρα ἀντιπρόσωπα, πρῶρα γὰρ τὸ πρόσωπον, καὶ ἀνδρόπρωρον ἀνδροπρόσωπον. *Soph. Tract.*

'Tis then the sufferer feels th' event,
 When the scales of Justice bent,
 Weigh down the future on the board:
 Till then, whate'er it be, before it come,¹
 I would not fain to hear the doom,
 Nor mourn before th' appointed hour;
 For come it will, clear like the day,
 And chime² with the prophetic lay.
 But may the future prosperous be!
 So pray we all, and so does she,
 Who now approaches near
 The solitary guardian tow'r
 Of this our Apian land.

[*Seeing CLYTEMNESTRA approaching.*

¹ For the same thought see Massinger's *Duke of Milan*, Act 1. Scene 3.
 Sforza speaks:

' To despair
 Is but to antedate those miseries
 That must fall on us.'

Also in the *Picture*, Act 1. Scene 1.

' I in this
 But foolishly inquire the knowledge of
 A future sorrow, which, if I find out,
 My present ignorance were a cheap purchase.'

² I have translated *σύναρθρον* ' chiming with,' in its poetical sense, and not
 ' jointed with,' in its prosaic and surgical sense.

Enter CHORUS, CLYTEMNESTRA.

CHORUS.

I come, O Clytemnestra ! and thus low
Worship thy sceptre, as 'tis meet we honour
A sovereign's consort when the throne is empty
Where the king sat. If aught of glad event
Thou hast heard, or rather led by gladd'ning hopes
Thou makest the altars fume, I fain would know,
Yet not intrusive on thy silence break.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Bearing glad tidings, as the proverb runs,
Rise morning from its kindly mother night.
Hear then, beyond thy hopes, the joyful tidings :
For Priam—the Argives have his city taken !

CHORUS.

What say'st thou ?
The flying word has left me all amazed.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Troy's ta'en by Argives : speak I clearly now ?

CHORUS.

O joyful tidings ! tear-awakening joy !

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Good man, thy joyful tears show thy true heart.

CHORUS.

What? hast thou proof and token sure of this?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ay, there is proof, unless some God deceives me!

CHORUS.

What? phantoms of enticing dreams have told thee?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Nay, I would never build my faith on dreams,
Seen in the slumbers of the senseless soul.

CHORUS.

Is't then the glad imaginings of rumour
That flies so quickly, though no wings it has?¹

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Scorn not my judgment like some silly maid's.

CHORUS.

How long ago? when was the city sack'd?

¹ ἀπτερος φάτις. It occurs to remark how this word ἀπτερος (without wings), as well as its adverbs ἀπτίρως and ἀπτερίως, should be used to express sudden, instantaneous, soft, and noiseless movements, by the Greek authors, Homer, Æschylus, Lycophron, and Apollonius Rhodius. In Lycophron, 625. Μετοχλίσας ἔλιζον ἥ γὰρ ἀπτίρως αὐται παλιμπόρευτον ἔξονται βάσιν. In Apollon. Rhod. κεῖθεν δ' ἀπτερίως διὰ μύριον οὐδμα λιπύλις. We should naturally ascribe 'wings' to quickness and suddenness of movement, and not expressly take them away. But the explanation ἀφωρίως (noiseless), ἡδῆα and προσηγής, (soft and smooth), in Hes. and Etymol. give a clue to the origin of this meaning, which appears derived from the flying of birds, not *without wings*, but without *moving* their wings, at which time their flight seems most smooth and rapid, skimming along without moving their wings: agreeably to the Miltonic expression 'Smooth gliding without step,' as has been suggested to me by my friend the Rev. H. F. Cary, with his usual good taste and fineness of perception.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

'Twas in the night that bore this rising light.

CHORUS.

But how? What messenger could come so fast?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

'Twas Vulcan: sending forth the blazing light
 From Ida's grove, and thence along the way
 Hither the estafette¹ of fire ran quick:
 Fire kindled fire, and beacon spoke to beacon,
 Ida to Lemnos, and the Hermæan ridge:
 Next Athos, craggy mountain, Jove's own steep,
 Took the great torch held out by Vulcan's isle.
 Standing sublime, the seas to overcast,²

¹ In the original *ἄγγαρος*, a Persic word (restored to the text from Eustathius, *Etymologicum Magnum*, and Suidas, in v.). I have rendered by a foreign word adopted in our language.

² So I have rendered this fine passage literally. Nothing can present a finer image than the original does of the beacon blazing on mount Athos, and with its splendor covering the back of the sea. Potter, following a faulty reading, introduces the Hellespont; whereas the word which he understood as 'Hellespont,' signifies the rising of the beacon over the sea. He has also made 'smiling way' out of *πρὸς ἡδονήν*, in which he has been much more ingenious than myself, for I can make nothing out of it, and I am persuaded that it is a corruption. *Πρὸς ἡδονήν* is a colloquial phrase, used adverbially, very common in Greek writers, prose and verse; and in the familiar interchange of conversation it is naturally joined with *λόγος*, *λέγω*, *εἶναι*, or *γενέσθαι*. *Πρὸς ἡδονήν* then is 'agreeably,' or, for the purpose of pleasing, as the French say 'à faire plaisir.' *Πρὸς ὀργήν*, is 'angrily;' *πρὸς εὐσεβείαν ἢ κύριον λόγον* is, 'the girl speaks piously.' In Lucian's *Toxaris*, *μὴ πρὸς ἀχθιδόνα μου ἀκούσης*, 'listen to me without irritation.' But not only the misapplication of such a phrase in a passage like this, but the defectiveness of the sentence points out some error in the copies, for a verb is evidently

Shone the great strength of the transmitted lamp;
 And the bright heraldry of burning pines
 Shone with a light all golden like the sun
 Rising at midnight on Macistus' watchtower: ¹

wanting to complete the sentence; and Dr. Blomfield's ellipsis of *ἰγίνετο* after *ὑπεριέλθης* is much too harsh and arbitrary. A verb should occupy the place of *πρὸς ἡδονήν*, in room of which I should be much inclined, as a mere conjecture, to propose *προσῆνυται* from Hesychius, v. *Προσάων*, *προσαύξων*, *ἀνύτων* γὰρ τὴν αὐξήσιν (so Is. Vossius reads for the faulty *αὐτὴν*). Here is authority from a tragic Lexicon for the word; for if *προσάων* existed, so did *προσανύτω*, *ἄνω ἀνύω* and *ἀνύτω*, being all cognate forms. *Ἀνύτω* (elliptically for *ἀνύτω ἰδὼν*) is of very frequent occurrence in the Attic writers. Eur. Hipp. 745. *Ἐπὶ μηλόσπορον ἀκτάν Ἀνύσαιμι τῶν αἰοδῶν*. Aristoph. Av. 241. *Ἀνύσαστε πετόμενα*. *Ἐξανύτω* (but without the ellipsis) in Phœn. 164. *Ἀνιμώχιος ἦθε δρόμον νεφέλας Ποσὶν ἔξανύσαιμι δι' αἰθέρος Πρὸς ἑμὸν δμολγνέτορα*. Render it 'to hasten, to despatch a journey quick.' *Προσανύτω* would have the same sense, with whatever additional force, significative of increase or addition, the preposition *πρὸς* might give it. 'The torch journeyed on waxing greater.' This is certainly a mere conjecture, and as such not to be admitted into the text; but its sense seems apposite, and its usage is supported by Hesychius. Rarity of occurrence is not in itself an insuperable objection in a language so diversified, and so little known to us from the scantiness of its remains. How many words occur, even in this one play, which are to be found only once! see the many words marked with asterisks in Dr. Blomfield's Glossary which are to be found only in Æschylus, and some but once. The epithet *δορυκανῆς*, for example, is unknown to Lexicons, and, I believe, to the existing texts of Greek authors; yet that word must reassume its place, being resuscitated from a line of Æsch. Suppl. 984. *Μήτ' οὖν ἀέλπτως δορυκανῆϊ μόρῳ θανὼν*, instead of the corrupt lections of Ald. and Rob. and Turn. *δόρυ κἀνημέριον*.

¹ So I have rendered it, retaining the reading *σκοπαῖς*, which Dr. Blomfield has altered into *σκοποῖς* (watchmen), not considering that he has substituted a less poetical reading; and that if *σκοποῖς* had been the word used by the poet, of δὲ would have followed in the next line instead of δὲ, as οἶδε answers to φύλαξι in the next line or two. Why Pauw and Potter should have expelled this Macistus (a mountain probably) for Macetas, I cannot conceive; nor why Wakefield should have gone out of his way to understand it as an adjective, thereby omitting the name of a station.

Nor did Macistus not bestir him soon,
Oppress'd with sleep, regardless of his watch ;
But kindled fires, and sent the beacon-blaze
To distance far beyond Euripus' flood,
To watchmen mounted on Messapian hills ;
They answer'd blazing, and pass'd on the news,
The grey heath burning on the mountain top.¹
And now the fiery, unobscured lamp,
At distance far shot o'er Asopus' plain ;
And up the steep soft rising, like the moon,
Stood spangling bright upon Cithæron's hill.
There rose, to give it conduct on the road,
Another meeting fire ; nor did the watch
Sleep at the coming of the stranger light,
But burnt a greater blaze than those before :
Thence o'er the lake Gorgopis stoop'd the light,
And to the mount of Ægiplancton came,
And bad the watch shine forth, nor scant the blaze.
They burning high with might unquenchable,

¹ Potter has absurdly made the word 'Erica,' which signifies 'heath,' a proper name, and made it a mountain with a 'shaggy brow,' thereby also improperly adding another station. The Messapian hills were the first station in Boeotia, and Cithæron the second. The Messapian hills bordered on the straits of the Euripus, and were celebrated amongst other things for the old legend of Glaucus the fisherman (it being from these mountains that he leapt into the sea), which story, told to them by the fishermen of the place, is said to have inspired the muse of Pindar and Æschylus ; the latter of whom composed a play on the subject, and the former an ode.

Send up the waving beard of fire aloft,
Mighty and huge, so as to cast its blaze
Beyond the glaring promontory steep
Athwart the gulf Saronic all on fire ;
Thence stoop'd the light, and reach'd our neighbour
 watchtow'r,
Arachne's summit; and from thence, derived
Here to the Atridæ's palace, comes this light
From the long lineage of the Idæan fire.
Such is the course of the lamp-bearing games,¹
When torches run in solemn festivals
One from another, in succession fill'd,
And the last runner and the first is victor.
Such are my proofs, and such the signal news,
Sent by my consort from the plains of Troy.

¹ This description of the fire-signals is very finely imagined, and executed with great spirit and sublimity. Vossius has well observed, in his notes on *Mela*, that the stations are assigned by the poet with geographical accuracy so as to admit of the signals being seen. Nothing more probable than the supposition by the poet, of an agreement between Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, to communicate the intelligence of the taking of Troy by such means. Such a mode of communication must have been very ancient. Homer finely describes a city under close siege holding out signals of distress, beacon burning on beacon. There is a pretty story in Pausan. Corinth. of Lynceus, flying after the dreadful marriage night, which he alone of fifty brothers survived, making the same signals to Hypermnestra of his safe arrival at Larcsia, and of her answering him also by beacon from Larissa. See the poems of the Bard of the North for several spirited descriptions of the burning of beacons, which glow with all the splendor of his vivid imagination.

CHORUS.

Hereafter to the gods, O queen ! I'll pray.
But now, in wondering pleasure at thy words,
I fain would stand, and hear them o'er again.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

This very day the Greeks are lords of Troy.¹
Now in the streets methinks I hear a peal
Of dreadful discord. Oil and vinegar
Into one vessel pour'd will ne'er unite,
But, like two foes at variance keep apart :
So they the conquer'd of the taken city,
And they the victors : you may hear apart
Two several voices, like their several fates.
They prostrate, rolling on the slaughter'd bodies
Of husbands, brothers ; children by the sires

¹ Potter very judiciously calls the attention of the reader to the powerful development of the character of Clytemnestra in this speech, which is truly a *chef d'œuvre*. I cannot do better than here transcribe his judicious and tasty note. 'It was observed in the preface to this tragedy, that the character of Clytemnestra was that of a high-spirited, close, determined, dangerous woman. This character now begins to unfold itself. She had, with deep premeditation, planned the murder of her husband ; he was now returning : her soul must of course be full at this time of her horrid design, and all her thoughts intent upon the execution of it. We have in this speech a strong proof of this : she is dark, sententious, and even religious ; so the Chorus understands her words, and so she intends they should ; but the very expressions by which she wishes to conceal, and does conceal her purpose, by being ambiguous, and by conveying a double meaning, so far mark the working of her mind, as to give us a hint what she is revolving here.'

Who gave them being, their fond parents dead,
 Wail with sad outcries, with enthralled necks ;
 But they the victors, wearied, famished,
 With toils of battle, running up and down
 Through the dun shades of night, at length like wolves
 Round the full boards and city feasts are set,
 Carousing in confusion ; all pell-mell
 Throng in the costly Trojan palaces
 Won by their swords ; now rid of open camps
 And dewy cover of night-freezing skies,
 And stretch'd at ease, like careless poor men tired,
 Sleep through the watches of th' unguarded night.
 'Tis well—and so it will be—if they keep
 Due reverence and homage to the gods
 Of that forsaken city and their fanes,
 They may chance 'scape such sad vicissitude,
 Nor feel themselves what they inflict on others——
 But let no impious lust, no thirst of gold,
 Light on them longing for disastrous spoils,
 Mad passion for those things 'tis sin to love !
 Let them beware ; they still want Heav'n's high favour
 To bring them back unhurt ; they still have left
 One whole side of the Stadium's length to run.
 But should they come, their forfeits on their heads,¹

¹ So I have rendered the line, following the reading of Porson. *Θεοῖς δ' ἂν ἀπλάκνυτο εἰ μάλ' οἱ στρατῶν.* *Θεοῖς ἀπλάκνυτο*, is, *Dīs obnoxius*, as Stanley

With Heav'n's high wrath benighted, then indeed
 The curse of blood might follow at their heels,
 And Troy's ensanguined sepulchres yield up
 Their charnel'd dead to cry aloud for vengeance—
 E'en should not fortune blow them other ills.
 These are but woman's words ; but O prevail
 Our better destinies, nor let the balance
 Hang in suspense ; of many a proffer'd blessing,
 I would have fix'd my heart, and chosen this.

CHORUS.

O queen ! no man more sagely could have spoken,
 Or utter'd graver sentiments ; but I

renders it. This is one of those words connected with the religious sentiments of the ancients, for which the poverty of our language supplies no substitute ; I have given the meaning in ' their forfeits on their heads.' *Θεοῖς ἀπλάκητος* is the same as in the line of Ibycus, cited from Plato's *Phædrus*: *Μήτι παρὰ Θεοῖς ἀμπλακῶν τιμὰν παρ' ἀνθρώπων ἀμείψω*. Without entering fully into what is foreign from this work, a long verbal discussion, it may be remarked that this word, in all its forms, has a double sense ; one a religious, the other a profane. In the latter it is joined in regimen with a genitive, as in *αἶας δάμνητος ἡμπλακεις*, *Eur. Alc.* and *κάμπλακω τοῦ σοῦ μῦθου*, in *Soph. Ant.* It may be remarked also, that Dr. Blomfield's objection to *ἀπλάκητος* would apply equally to *ἀναπλάκητος*, which is the same word with the *α* privative prefixed. And to say that the latter word is to be found and the former *not*, is to beg the question, as it now stands in the two passages cited from *Sophocles*' *Trachiniæ*, and *Œdipus Tyrannus*. At any rate, the context here (if ever context did) points to the meaning I have given : and the reading *ἀναπλάκητος* and its interpretation, '*Quamvis exercitus nullis erroribus actus redierit*,' is as much against the force and spirit of the context, as it is against the genius of the Greek language to couple *ει* with *μόλοι* (without *καί*) and render it '*Quamvis*.'

Now being possess'd of thy confirmed tidings,
Prepare me rightly to address the gods;
For by our toils a glorious crown is won.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

CHORUS.

O monarch Jove! O gracious Night!
Mother of these glories bright;
Who flung'st th' impassive net o'er Troy's high tower,
Slumb'ring deep in silent hour:
Surrounding all
With thickest pall
Cast upon her babes at night,
And her warlike men of might;
That none could 'scape the mighty throw
Of Atè's hideous net, which compass'd all with woe.
Thou who did'st do it, Xenius Jove,
Thee I adore, great power above!
He from the first preparing for the blow,
'Gainst Alexander bent his awful bow:
Such stedfast aim the godhead took,
And with such force he bent,
That not the mark the whizzing bolt mistook,
Nor shot above the stars an idle meteor went.
They can tell how Troy was struck;
They can trace the avenging god
By his deeds, and deathsome track,

And smoking footsteps where he trod.
 It has been said, that gods above
 Stoop'd not their eyes on men below,
 When with black insolence they durst invade
 The inmost sanctuary of grace,
 And judging Gods defied.
 So said the impious; but the Gods¹

¹ Potter, in rendering, or rather to avoid the difficulty of rendering this passage, has wandered so far into vagueness of expression, (the general fault of his choruses) that it is difficult to know what reading or sense he followed. In short, he has shrouded himself in darkness, and has put out the candles, in order that if he could not see himself, no one else might. I have followed the plain and natural sense of the passage and the context; and it may be remarked once for all, in the difficulties of a dead language, in all the difficulties of tropes, figures, and metaphors of a daring poetry, and in all the perplexities of doubtful and vitiated readings, yet so natural and easy is the style of these great masters, that their meaning is generally obvious: they, as it were, lead you by the hand through dark and doubtful labyrinths by the light of reason and nature, would but commentators be contented to follow them, and understand their simplicity. Why, for instance, should Dr. Blomfield so boldly pronounce this passage to be corrupt? why should he attempt to rewrite it? that is, entirely to change the thoughts and phrases of his author, on account of a schoolboy difficulty as to the number of *πίφανται*, and the usage of *παρκίῃ*, which word occurs in a line of Solon, cited by Plutarch, in much the same sense as it is used here. Allow the difficulty; note the word for the benefit of students; endeavour, if you please, to emend; but do not exercise your own poetic vein in original composition at the expense of your author. A difficult, or rare word or meaning, is not necessarily a corruption; *πίφανται* may be plural as well as *κίρνανται* in the Hippol. 1258, which Professor Monk has retained in preference to *κρίμανται*, a reading supplied by the Cod. Flor.: or if *πίφανται* could not agree with *οἱ θεοὶ*, would it not be more natural to understand τὸ θεῖον? Again, *ἴστω* may be used for *εἴη*, (expressing a wish or prayer earnestly in the imperative instead of the optative) as in Æsch. Suppl. 678:

Ἥβας δ' ἀνδρὶς ἀδρεπτον ἴστω.

Have shown themselves in dreadful view
 E'en to the children of aspiring kings,
 And to these hosts of war in armour bright,
 Steel'd and caparison'd for lawless fight,
 Whilst plumed Mars breathed horror on their helmets :
 And to the plenteous palaces of pride,
 The towers of grandeur, and the thrones of state,
 Too glorious to be good.¹
 Be sober-minded wisdom mine,
 The chasten'd soul, and lowly lot,
 Free from the sins and woes that guard the regal gate.
 For the great tower of wealth,² though massy built,
 Is but a weak, defenceless wall

¹ I am happy to have the authority of Stanley on my side in his version, as well as that of Dr. Butler; I may also add Hermannus, who has only quarrelled with *ὕπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστον*, substituting *ἔπερ*, *why* I am at a loss to conceive: nor can I conceive what profanation there is (as Dr. Blomfield calls it) to join *φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπέρβην ὑπὲρ τὸ βέλτιστον*. Why? the whole sense of the sentence rests on the joining of these expressions. The wealth of their house was grand, superabundant, excessive, even beyond righteousness, or fitness; in short, as I have rendered it, 'Too glorious to be good.' What is all this but the thought that occurs in the sacred Scriptures, 'Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked?' I can see no profanation in this, but something like it in Dr. Blomfield's attempt to deface the venerable remains of the old Greek writer.

² This fine image of the 'Tower of Wealth' is to be met with in the fragments of Pindar, *Πόττερον δίκας ταῖχος ὕμνον ἢ σκολας ἀπάτας*; also in the same author's Nemea, v. 53, *Πύργος ὑψηλᾶς ἀρετᾶς*. Claudian, Consul. Honor. iv. 109. *Non dabitis murum Sceleri; qui vindicet ibit*.

For him, the surfeiter of mighty soul,¹
 Who, with iniquitous and daring heel,
 Has Dicè's solemn altar spurn'd:
 No; for the sightless and appalling doom
 Involves his bulwark tow'rs in gloom.
 Wretched persuasion, Peitho dire,²
 Eldest of council in divan;
 Até's intolerable child,
 Waxes in force, and drives her victim on.
 Help medicinal all in vain!

¹ This expression may be obscure in English; it is a favourite expression of the Greeks, expressive of the wantonness of too much prosperity; 'a moral surfeit.' The image of profaning the altars occurs in Massinger's *Bashful Lover*, 'on the altars daunc'd.' It may be necessary, once for all, to explain, that Dicè is the Goddess of Justice. See Clem. Alex. Protr. 12.

² Peitho here is Persuasion, a personification of that moral cause within us that induces or persuades us to commit bad actions, as it were, persuades us by false lights and colours, and, in short, acts the part of a rhetorician; for Πειθὼ is properly used for the effect produced by oratory. Carrying on the metaphor or allegory, the poet calls her Πρόβουλος (eldest of counsel in divan), one who *first* gives his vote, or proposes his bill, a term borrowed from the Senate at Athens. As this still voice within us is the origin of our crimes, he calls her the child of Até (Woe and Calamity). In short, as the senator, the Πρόβουλος, voted and advised, and drew up the Πρόβουλον, the bill to be submitted to the people; so the poet allegorically represents this principle of action within us, this Peitho, holding a council, and advising our actions. Potter has run away apparently scared by this uncouth word Προβουλῆς, which occurs nowhere else, and has not attempted a version of it. I differ from those who render it, 'Quæ posteris consulit.' Προβουλῆς, in my opinion, is the first counsellor-child, as μόνη is the only child, in Alc. 909. In the endless varieties of the Grecian mythology, Peitho was by some of the poets represented as one of the Graces. See Paus. Bæotic. 35.

He is not hid, he shines afar,
 A lurid, pestilential star ;
 And like bad brass by touchstone tried,
 So he of blackest metal forged,
 Deep to the centre ; since, like boy,
 He follows fast the flying bird ;
 And in the midst of all his city's state
 Intolerable mischief seats :
 His pray'rs no one of Heav'n will hear,
 But hurl the impious down.

Such was Paris when he came
 To the house of Sparta's lord,
 And like a caitiff stole the dame,
 Profaner of the Xenian board.
 Daring th' undareable, she fled,¹
 And is already past the gates,
 Gliding soft with silent tread ;
 But left behind her, as she went,
 War, and tumult's gathering din,
 To those her country's men :

¹ So Shakspeare, in his Comedy of Errors :

' A heavier task could not have been imposed,
 Than I to *speak* my griefs *unspeakable*.'

The poet here very concisely touches on the elopement of Helen ! Compare the beautiful and picturesque description of the elopement of Medea, by Apollonius Rhodius, in the beginning of the fourth book.

Spears thick, and shields, and arming hosts,
 Nodding helms which throng'd around ;
 Ships spread with sails, and steel-clad men thereon ;
 Drawing, meanwhile, to Troy, upon the main,
 Her heavy dower, destruction in her train.
 But from the palace as she went,
 Loud did the minstrels of the house lament :¹
 Alas ! alas ! O house ! O chiefs ! they said,
 O prints of her loved feet ! O nuptial bed !
 He comes, and sees her much-loved bow'r forlorn ;
 Disgrace and solitude are there :
 His lips reproach not, though his heart is torn ;

¹ Προφῆται I have rendered minstrels ; that word, and *vates*, in Latin, meaning both prophets and minstrels. Dr. Blomfield very ingeniously explains the meaning of the word Προφήτης, 'qui pro alio loquitur,' a sense which at once explains how it obtained this double sense. Schutz, Butler, Heath, Blomfield, are decidedly right (against Stanley) in making these minstrels belong to Menelaus. Menelaus' house is the scene, Helen has just eloped, and the agony and despair of Menelaus are painted in what follows : 'He comes and sees,' &c. Potter's version is evidently wrong, though very pretty lines, beginning with, 'Ah, silent see she stands,' down to 'Far o'er the rolling sea the wanton roves.' Potter in this place stands enamoured of some imaginary picture of Helen, which he supposes Menelaus is looking at, forgetful that the only picture presented here by the poet is the despair of Menelaus. Πάριστι (he comes) σιγαῖς (in silence), for so I would read for σιγὰς ; and I have adopted, *pro tempore*, faute de mieux, ἄπιστος, from Hermannus, as the reader will see by my version. No doubt, the whole passage is intricate and corrupt ; but really not two words of Potter's version can be discovered in the original by the help of any glasses. Πάριστι and δόξει, coupled by δὲ, must have the same nominative : δόξει evidently refers to Menelaus, therefore Πάριστι must. Besides, the epithets ἄτιμος, ἀλοδορός, inapplicable to a picture of Helen, evidently designate Menelaus as the subject matter.

He scarce believes his eyes, in wond'ring sad despair.
 He walks his house with dismal tread,
 Like silent ghost unblest,
 Wan with the love of her who fled
 Beyond the seas; he knows no rest;
 Turns from her beauteous statues with a sigh,¹
 And hates the form that pleased his eye;
 For all the Venus of her face is gone
 In heavy eyes of lifeless stone.
 Then, shown in dreams, around him throng
 Visions sad of empty joy;
 Empty joy, for when he seems
 To see the fair one in his dreams,
 Quick through his hands the vision flies,
 And mounts the skies
 On wings that follow Sleep along his airy road.
 Such sufferings, and still greater, were
 In the house of Atreus' heir.
 But through the bounds of Grecia's land,
 Who sent her sons for Troy to part,
 See mourning, with much suffering heart,

¹ The same idea of the anguish occasioned by a representation of a beloved
 Object that is absent, occurs Xenoph. Symp. ὅτι ὁ Σώκρατες, ἡ μὲν αὐτοῦ
 εἰς αὐφραίνει δύναται, ἡ δὲ τοῦ εἰδώλου τέρψιν μὲν οὐ παρέχει, πόθον δὲ
 ἐμποιεῖ.

On each man's threshold stand,
On each sad hearth in Grecia's land.
Well may her soul with grief be rent;
She well remembers whom she sent,
She sees them not return :
Instead of men to each man's home,
Urns and ashes only come,
And the armour which they wore ;
Sad relics to their native shore.
For Mars, the barterer of the lifeless clay,
Who sells for gold the slain,
And holds the scale, in battle's doubtful day,
High balanced o'er the plain ;
From Ilium's walls for men returns
Ashes and sepulchral urns ;
Ashes wet with many a tear,
Sad relics of the fiery bier.
Round the full urns the general groan
Goes, as each their kindred own.
One they mourn in battle strong,
And one, that 'mid the armed throng
He sunk in glory's slaughtering tide,
And for another's consort died.
Such the sounds that, mix'd with wail,
In secret whispers round prevail ;

And envy, join'd with silent griefs,¹
Spreads 'gainst the two Atridæ chiefs,
Who began the public fray,
And to vengeance led the way.
Others they mourn whose monuments stand
By Ilium's walls on foreign strand;
Where they fell in beauty's bloom,
There they lie in hated tomb;
Sunk beneath the massy mound,
In eternal chambers bound.
Whene'er a city moves its men to wrath,
Heavy their rumour; and a people's curse
Works out its ruler's woe.
My soul stands tiptoe with affright;
I stand like one with listening ear,
Ready to catch the sound of fear;
And lift my eyes to see some sight
Coming from the pall of night.
For Gods behold not unconcern'd from high,
When smoking slaughter mounts the sky,
The mighty murd'ers of the direful plain.
For then the black Erinnyes rise
With Time their helper, and with fate reversed;

¹ For this rarer usage of the word 'envy,' see Shakspeare's *Henry VI.* p. 3, and Steevens' note:

'Exempt from envy, but not from disdain!'

And make the mighty justice-slighting man
 Pale in the midst of Glory's proud career;
 And hurl him 'mid the hapless crew who groan,
 Helpless, unpitied, and unknown.

To be far-famed, and touch the skies,
 Is on a giddy height to move;
 The fire of Jove bursts in his eyes,
 And the thunder rolls above.

Grant me wealth, but not that state
 Where Envy waits upon the great:
 Let me not be in high renown,
 The sacker of another's town;
 Nor let me see my country fall
 By others' hands to Slavery's thrall.

Now, from the beacon-light which fires the skies,
 Quick through the town the winged rumour flies:

If true, who knows?

It may be false, I fear! ¹

For who so childish, and of senses shorn,
 To let his soul be kindled all at once
 With the first tidings of a moment's glare,
 And then, when changeful tidings come,
 To sink into despair?

¹ I quite agree with Stanley's emendation, who for ἤτοι θεῶν ἔστι μὴ ψέθος, would read, εἴτοι θεῶν ἔστιν ἢ ψέθος.

It well beseems a female throne,
 Before the event is clearly known,
 To solemnize the joy :
 The female mind too quickly moves,¹
 Too apt to credit what it loves ;
 But short-lived is the fame
 Which female heraldries proclaim.

¹ The words in the original are *θηλύτερος ἔρος*, which is no doubt a sane reading, well explained by the Scholiast, ἤγουν περιφραστικῶς ἡ γυνή. Bothius audaciously and gratuitously proposes to read *θηλύτερον ὄς*, showing thereby a very ill-timed partiality for that organ, probably upon the ground of our valuing most what we do not possess. Another part of the female person would be fully as appropriate, and with the addition of one letter only we might propose (as a *contre-projet* to that of this German critic) *ὁ θηλύτερος ὀβήρος* ; to which most happily apply the epithets *ταχύπαρος* and *ἄγαν πλθανός*. Seriously, however, *ἔρος* (Dr. Blomfield) seems a happy conjecture. An analogous thought is prettily expressed in Hamlet (only change *fear* into *hope*) :

For women *hope* too much e'en as they love,
 And women's *hope* and love hold quantity,
 In neither aught or in extremity.

CHORUS and CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Soon shall we know if these light-bearing lamps,
These watches kept, these interchanging fires,
Are true; or if, like some delicious dream,
This light has cozen'd us: my eyes descry
A herald from the beach approaching fast,
And mark his olive boughs; and lo! mud's brother,
The parching, thirsty dust, proclaims his speed.
Now ye have got, my lords, one who will speak,
Speak to your doubtings, not with treacherous flames
Of mountain wood and ruddy smoke, but one
Who, face to face, will swell our joy more high;
Or—but my tongue abhors ill-boding words—
All looks well now: God grant it may so end.

CHORUS.

Whoe'er prays otherwise, we pray he may
Reap the sad fruits that grow in canker'd hearts.

CHORUS, HERALD, CLYTEMNESTRA.

HERALD.

Ho ho! my native and paternal soil! ¹

Ho ho! my country, and the sweet approach

Of Argive land! in ten long years return'd,

¹ The unity of action is preserved in this play, but the unity of time would *appear* to be disregarded, for nothing but a miracle could have brought the herald home so soon, supposing the exhibition of the beacons to have taken place immediately on the taking of Troy. The fact is, the Greek poets did not observe the minor unities of time and place so scrupulously as the French. Sophocles presents in the *Trachiniæ* a more glaring example, in the mission of Hyllus and his return (a distance of 120 Italian miles), which takes place during the acting of a hundred lines. In the *Eumenides* Æschylus opens the play at Delphi, and ends it at Athens. Aristotle, as Twining properly remarks, does not lay down the unity of time as a rule, but says that tragedy endeavours to circumscribe the period of its action to one revolution of the sun: ἡ δὲ ἔτι μάλιστα πειρᾶται ὑπὸ μίαν περίωδον ἥλίου εἶναι ἢ μικρὸν ἑξαλλάττειν. Strictly speaking, however, the unity of time is not violated in this play. The poet has hazarded a miracle or improbability off the stage, artificially and clandestinely concealed from the attention of the spectators; but every thing on the stage proceeds rapidly and consecutively in the space of a day, and nothing *there* occurs to mark any greater lapse of time. The passions, the feelings of the audience, under the influence of so great a poet, could admit of no marked delay, no interval; all their faculties being wound up, and hurrying on to the horrid catastrophe. However, from an obscure hint in Aristotle, it would appear that Æschylus had not always observed even unity of fable, and that Agatho had made some unsuccessful experiments of the same sort.

The joy of the herald, and his salutation of his country's Gods, before he noticed his countrymen, was in the spirit of those days, and differing from ours. Cato, in a didactic work, recommends the farmer on his return, 'Primum larem salutato.'

I stand upon thee gladly, O my country !
 And save this one of many a shipwreck'd hope.
 O much I fear'd I ne'er should see thy shores,
 Nor when I died, be gather'd to thy lap.¹
 Now Earth, all hail ! all hail, thou Sun of light !
 And Jove, this realm's great paramount ! and thou,
 O King of Pytho, hurling from thy bow
 Thy shafts no more against us ; full enough
 We felt thy ire by sad Scamander's banks :
 Now be our saviour, and our lord of games,
 O King Apollo ! and I call ye all,
 Ye Gods of festivals, and thee, my patron,²
 Sweet Herald God ! whom heralds most adore ;
 And ye, the worshipp'd Heroes of old times,
 Who sent your armed sons to battle forth ;
 Receive what now remains of us, the gleanings
 Of hostile spears. O palace of our kings !

¹ So says Lucian, *Encom. Pat.* 'Εκαστος γυν και γεγηρακότων και σπασθε και εϋχεται καταλϋσαι τον βιον επι της πατριδος, ινα ζθεν ηρξατο βιοϋ εταυθα πάλιν και τδ σωμα παρακαταθηται τη θρηψαμένη γη και των πατρων κοινηση τάφων.

² Potter has wrongly translated τιμήρορ 'avenger.' Τιμήρορ is something equivalent to our word 'patron,' or 'guardian.' See that beautiful passage in Apollonius Rhodius, iv. 1309, where Jason is awoke from his wretched sleep, in the midst of despair, by the three nymphs, heroines, guardians of Libya, 'Ηρῶσσαι Λιβύης τιμήρορ: also an uncertain fragment of Euripid. ap. Stob. lxxv.

τδ δ' ἄρσεν ἔστην' ἐν δόμοις ἀεὶ γένος
 θεῶν πατρῶων και τάφων τιμάρορ.

Dear roofs, and venerated judgment seats:
 And ye, sun-facing images of Gods!
 Now, now, if ever, beam with joyful eyes
 Upon your king returning;—lo! he comes,
 King Agamemnon, bringing now at last
 A light in darkness, and a general shine
 On you, on all the people, on all those
 Who throng around. But greet him, greet him well,
 (Such honour is the mighty conqueror's meed)
 Who, arm'd with vengeance and the mace of Jove,
 Unloosed the stony, massy girths of Troy.
 Ay, now Jove's spade¹ has finish'd its dread work,
 And made a mound of all that mighty field;
 Altars and fanes in unknown ruins lie,
 And without seed lies all the blasted land.
 Thus comes Atrides from the siege of Troy,
 Which 'neath his yoke has bent her turrets high.
 O happy, glorious, honourable man,
 Deserving praise of men far, far beyond
 What any worthy of this age can claim.
 The vaunts of Troy and Paris are no more,
 Boasting the arm of Justice could not reach them;
 But it has spann'd them with a hand as large

¹ The same expression occurs in a fragment of Sophocles, cited by the Scholiast on the Aves.

Χρυσῇ μακίλλῃ Ζηνὸς ἐξαναστραφῇ.

As their offendings: the convicted thief¹
 Has lost his mainprize, and the ravisher
 Has with his beauteous fair one lost himself,
 And bared his father's house to the dire edge
 Of naked ruin; and old Priam's sons
 Have with their blood his double forfeits paid.

CHORUS.

Herald of the Argives from the host,² all health
 And joy be with thee.

HERALD.

Take me to ye, Gods!
 I ne'er can live to greater joy than this!

¹ Paris.

² In this conversation it may be proper to notice to the English reader that the part which Potter has given to Clytemnestra I have assigned to the Chorus, therein following Heath, who has been followed by all subsequent editors. Potter, who appears to have been to that critic what the elephant is said to be to the rhinoceros, manfully, in a note, opposes this innovation. However there can be no doubt of its propriety. Clytemnestra, during this whole scene, being now fully apprized of the taking of Troy, and the approaching return of her husband, and finding herself brought by events to the eve of what she had long meditated, is apart, wrapt up in gloomy meditations, and gaining time to collect herself. In the meantime the dialogue goes on between the Herald and the Chorus, which is very artfully conducted by the poet, and rendered intentionally obscure; the Chorus appearing fearful of being overheard or understood by Clytemnestra in their covert complaints of her and Ægisthus during their regency, under which, it is insinuated, that it would have been a crime to have expressed great regret at the absence of Agamemnon. The Herald's part is also very characteristic: his curiosity is momentarily raised by the insinuations of the Chorus; but on their declining to be immediately explicit, buoyant with the joy of the moment, he forgets them and their complaints, and returns to the narrative of his adventures.

CHORUS.

Felt'st thou in absence all a lover's pangs
For this thy native land?

HERALD.

Behold my eyes
Weep with delight, and answer thee in tears.

CHORUS.

Others shared with you in that sweet disease.

HERALD.

How, pr'ythee? let me understand thee! speak.

CHORUS.

Some long'd for you, much as ye long'd for them.

HERALD.

We were then both regretting and regretted?

CHORUS.

Ay, we regretted, but with smother'd groans,
Stifled in secret.

HERALD.

Whence this secret sorrow?

CHORUS.

Hush! silence is a balm that cures mishap.

HERALD.

Ha! were there any then that caused such fear
To make thee tremble when your king was absent?

CHORUS.

You spoke our feelings when you welcomed death.

HERALD.

From joy I spoke it; but thus length of time
 Brings with it much that falls out to our liking,
 And much to cavil at. For who but God
 Lives through all age without the stain of woe?
 I could tell hardships and inclement watches;
 Cribs and close-pent up hatches; beds on plank;
 Our labours, rather call them suff'rings, were
 Set by the hours of each revolving day.
 But this was light to what we bore on land:
 Tents by the hostile walls, and drizzling skies,
 And marshy fens, and jerkins mildew'd o'er,
 And, matty-hair'd, our soldiers look'd like beasts.¹
 Or shall I tell our wint'rings, and the cold
 We scarce could bear, engender'd by the snows
 That hid mount Ida, when the rage of winter
 Swept from the landskip e'en the birds of air?
 Or how we broil'd in summer's sultry calms,
 When, on his mid-day couch, the unruffled sea
 Slept in the stillness of the noontide air,
 Without a breeze or sigh of zephyr heard.
 'Tis o'er; 'tis ended—why lament it now?

¹ Potter would have done well not to have attacked Heath's version of this passage, which is quite correct: *τιθηντες ἑσθρον τριχα*, 'making our hair like the shag of wild beasts.' Where in these words can he find the shadow of his own version, 'Shrouded ill in shaggy coverings?'

Now all the labours of the war are past,
 Are past to us; ay, and past too to them,
 Our comrades dead; to them all feeling's past,
 Or thoughts of rising from their lowly beds.
 Why talk of them, poor souls? why tell how many
 Perish'd, alas! and overcloud the joy
 Of those whose life is left? Down, down, sad thoughts!
 'Tis time to part from grief, and welcome joy.
 We that are left of that great Argive host
 Can say our losses in the scale are light
 Weigh'd 'gainst our gains: why we may take our station,
 Borne on the wings of fame o'er sea and land,¹
 And show our glories to the dazzling sun,
 Proclaiming as we go—'These are the spoils
 'The Greeks have taken from the towers of Troy,
 'And hung them in the temples of their Gods,
 'A blazonry for ages yet to come.'
 As such sounds spread abroad, the list'ning world

¹ Nothing can be plainer than this fine passage with only expunging the full stop after *ποτωμένοις*, which is in all the editions. Commentators, from not understanding the meaning, and probably being dazzled with its brilliancy, have not seen that *ποτωμένοις* is here a figurative 'flying,' in which the herald is made to represent himself and his comrades, the conquerors of Troy, flying over sea and land, and, as they go, proclaiming what follows, *Τροίην ἰλόντες*, &c. *Ποτωμένους* or *ποτωμένοις* is the reading. I will not stop to examine Dr. Blomfield's proposed alteration; it sufficiently refutes itself. His *ποτῶ-μενοι* should be *πτάμενοι*, and even then it would produce a very poor and wretched sense.

Must needs our chiefs admire, our city laud,
And honour will be paid to Jove, whose grace
These deeds accomplish'd. Thou hast heard me out.

CHORUS.

What thou hast said has quite o'ercome my doubts,
I own it; for thus old men have their bloom,¹
Wisdom, and prudence, and inquiry sage:
But the rich freighting of these precious tidings
Mostly concern, though me amongst the rest,
This house and royal Clytemnestra's ears.

CLYTEMNESTRA (*approaching, who had been apart
during the previous conversation*).

I have rejoiced already, in that hour
When the first midnight messenger of fire
Rode through the dark, proclaiming Troy was taken.
Some argued me of lightness of belief:
'Sure dost thou think Troy sack'd, by midnight fires
'Too easily persuaded? Ah! fond woman,
'Thou bear'st a buoyant and believing heart.'

¹ This is evidently an opposition between the bloom of the body, which belongs to the young, and the bloom of the mind, which develops itself in the old. Sophocles ap. Stob. tit. cxviii. has a similar thought:

Οὐκ ἔστι γῆρας τῶν σοφῶν ἔνδις ὁ νῦς
Θεία σύνεστιν ἡμέρα τετραμμένος.

In Stob. cxiv. the same thought is expressed closer to this passage. Σκέψασθαι δὲ καλῶς ὅτι οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῷ μὲν εἰς φρονεῖν ἐκμάχουσιν.

I, thus perplex'd, yet, woman as I was,¹
 Commanded sacrifice, and through the city
 The solemn choirs of ululation rang;
 And in the temples of the Gods they cried,
 Lulling asleep the mighty rising flames,
 Which eat the sacrifice, and fill'd the fanes
 With cloudy perfumes, mounting to the skies.
 But now enough! I'll hear no more from thee;
 The king comes shortly; from his mouth alone
 I'll hear the rest. Ay, now my noble lord
 Arrives! my eager thoughts fly forward to him,
 My soul's in preparation to receive him.
 And how to do it fitly? O blest day!
 Fairest of earthly days to her whose eyes
 Behold her lord returning, by kind Gods,
 Safe from the edge of battle; at the moment
 When open fly the gates at his approach,
 Go, bear this message to my noble lord:
 'Come quickly to thy city, much-loved prince,
 'Come to thy consort true, whom thou wilt find
 'Such as thou left'st, a watch-dog on thy hearth,
 'Good, gentle, kind to thee, but to thy foes
 'A bitter enemy; alike in all things;

¹ Γυναικίῳ νόμῳ here means 'By a woman's edict,' (said sarcastically by Clytemnestra) and not, as Potter has rendered it, 'As weak women wont.'

' One who has kept the print upon thy seals '
 ' For years unbroken and inviolate ;
 ' From all but thee a stranger still to pleasure,
 ' And by the breath of evil fame unsullied
 ' As the pure metal from the dyer's art.'²

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

¹ In this message to her husband, Clytemnestra, according to the usage of those simple times, reports to him that she had not broken *one* seal in his house, though he had been so long away. It appears to have been the custom of the ancient Greek ladies (and a very good custom it was) to send to their husbands at a distance these comforting assurances that housewifery had not suffered in their absence, that their strong box had not been broken open, nor their cellars entered. Lichas, in the Trachiniae, bears the same message from Deianira to Hercules, in the scene where, instead of the artful and collected message of Clytemnestra, the faithful and affectionate Deianira, agitated by love, jealousy, and impatience, can hardly find words to express herself, and hurries off the herald without professing her love, except by that beautiful stroke at the end, full of real love, refinement, and delicacy. *Τὴ δὴτ' ἄν ἄλλο γ' ἐνέποις ; δίδοικα γὰρ Μὴ πρῶ λέγοις ἄν τὸν πόθον τὸν ἐξ ἑμοῦ Πρὶν εἶδέναι τὰ κεῖθεν εἰ ποθοῦμεθα.* Potter, however, and Schutz (which is more surprising, for Schutz is the very best interpreter of Æschylus), disdaining such humbleness, figures away with expressions about the seal of constancy, giving her words a metaphorical meaning. That was a tender point certainly in this case ; but these gentlemen are in too great a hurry ; the lady herself comes to that question in the next line, and in very pretty words vindicates her character. In which mark the difference of two characters as drawn by two great dramatists : Deianira, innocent and attached, says nothing of her innocence or her attachment ; Clytemnestra, guilty, loudly professes both one and the other. I am surprised that any scholar should so render *σημαντήριον*, limited by the word *οὐδὲν*, ' I have not broken one seal.' How can such an expression refer to a seal of constancy ? were there then many seals of constancy ? the trespass in such a case must be one and indivisible, whereas she might have broken open his strong box, and yet not entered his cellar. Had the poet intended that sense, he would have said *σημαντήριον εὐνῆς*, or some such phrase.

² Potter has rendered this ' More than the virgin metal in the mines Knows

HERALD.

'Tis bravely spoken, like a noble woman.
How fair her lips spoke vaunts of conscious truth!

CHORUS.

Indeed, and with becoming grace she spoke
Those fair, clear, pearly words thy ears have heard.¹
But let me question thee; and, Herald, say,
Is Menelaus safe? comes he with you?
Dear sovereign, ever honour'd in this land.

HERALD.

I will not speak ye false; howe'er, my friends,
Falsehood might please ye with a flatt'ring tale,
Yet 'twould not bear against the lapse of time.

CHORUS.

Speak what is true: would it were pleasant too!
But joy and truth keep not together with ye,
Alas! 'tis plain, and thou canst not conceal it.

an adulterate and debasing mixture.' See his note, in which he confesses himself doubtful, and acknowledges his guide Pauw to be at a loss. Dr. Blomfield seems also a little puzzled; but at any rate does right in condemning Schutz's rendering χαλκοῦ βαρὰς, 'vulnera ære facta.' Dr. Butler and Abreschius are clearly right in rendering it 'tinctura æris,' 'the dying of metals;' a proverbial expression, to signify 'a thing impossible or out of the question,' dying being a process peculiar to wool, and inapplicable to metals. Χαλκός (from Pseudo-Gregorius' tragedy) would be a preferable reading to χαλκοῦ.

¹ I have followed here the excellent reading of Dr. Blomfield's edition. Τοροῖσιν ἐρμηνεύουσιν εὐπερικῶς λόγοις (for εὐπρεπῇ λόγον).

HERALD.

The truth is, Menelaus disappear'd,
He and his ship lost sight of by the Greeks.

CHORUS.

What? sail'd he first from Ilion, or did storms
Fall on the fleet, and sever him at sea?

HERALD.

Now thou hast hit it, like a skilful bowman,
And made few words embrace a world of woe.

CHORUS.

How spoke the current rumour of the fleet?
Think they he lives, or perish'd in the storm?

HERALD.

All is in doubt: none knows to speak for certain,
Except indeed the orb of day would tell,
The common eye of nature and the world.

CHORUS.

But say how fell the tempest on our host,
In visitation of the angry Gods?
Say how it raged, and how its rage subsided.

HERALD.

'Twere profanation for the tongue of woe
To sound upon a festival of joy;
The twofold Gods require twofold oblations,
And a great boundary stands between their rites.
If 'twere a messenger come posting home

With horrid countenance, whose quivering lips
 Spoke armies fallen and the rage of Mars,
 His iron flail and harness roll'd in blood ;¹
 Whose tongue spoke daggers to the commonweal,
 And through the city made the knell of death
 Sound in each house the service of the dead—
 Then were a day of mourning ; then the shrines
 Of the dread Furies should resound lament ;
 But a fair messenger of gladsome news,
 Sent to a city crown'd in prosperous state,
 How can I mix ill-omen'd sounds with glad,
 And paint the storm which overtook our host,
 Not undesign'd by Gods in anger ? Elements,²
 Before most hostile, join'd in league together
 To wreck us, fire and water ; the wing'd lightning
 And sea did both their utmost. In the night
 The horrid clamour of the Thracian winds
 Gave note of woe, curling the monstrous deep
 With rising billows, and uprear'd the ships,
 Ship against ship, with crashing mainyards roll'd.

¹ I have here (wrongly) applied *φοινίαν συνωρίδα* to the *μάστιγι διπλῇ τῇ Ἄρης φοιᾷ*, for I believe Dr. Blomfield is right in his interpretation, which represents the messenger's news, in its double effect, public and private, as *διλογχόν ἄτην, φοινίαν συνωρίδα*, 'a two-edged bane, a bloodred team of woe.'

² So Milton, *Paradise Regained*, book iv.

'Fire with water

In ruin reconciled.'

The butting winter with his utmost force
 Drove 'gainst the ships, belab'ring them with storm,
 Typhon and whirlwinds eddying in mid air;
 With fearful noises and loud stormy roar
 Beset around, they vanish'd deep in night,
 Top-giddy, whirl'd about, or scatter'd wide,
 By devious and misguiding shepherd¹ led.
 But when the bright light of the sun arose,
 We saw the wide Ægean effloresce²
 With wrecks of ships, and weltering carcasses
 Of Argive men, that the thick foam inlaid.
 We and our ship (whose hull still bore it bravely)
 Escaped our doom, stol'n or begg'd off from fate
 By some superior being: 'twas not man
 Who help'd us then and grasp'd our giddy helm;
 And saving Fortune sat upon our ship
 Doing a seaman's duty, till we came
 Safe into harbour from the seething sea,
 Nor stranded on the rough stone-ribbed coast.
 O how the day look'd lovely, when ashore

¹ So Æschylus calls the Tempest.

² I have in this word given the literal translation of the original, which I have been anxious to preserve whenever I could find a word to convey the metaphor. The word in the original conveys the idea of the sea flowering with bodies and wrecks, rising from it as flowers and plants from a field. The same metaphor is very common in Greek authors. Lucian so represents the heavens flowering with stars in Περὶ Οἴκου: Οὐρανὸς ἀνθῶν πυρρῶν.

We crawl'd, escaped from the wat'ry jaws
 Of a sea-death ! but yet our sense so stunn'd,
 We scarce could credit it : then our fresh loss
 Smote heavy on us, and thick-coming fancies
 We fed upon in musing, as we thought
 Of our lost comrades, and our shipwreck'd host.¹
 And now of them, if some have life and being,
 Their converse is of us as ours of them ;
 And now they sit around with woful face,
 And as of men departed now they speak,
 And we the deadmen, they the mourners are ;
 But be't the best it may. For Menelaus,
 Look for his coming first, our chiefest care,
 If still some peering sunbeam can espy
 The chief among the living crowd of men,
 And looking at the gladness of life's day,

¹ There is something in this description of the landing after the storm, and the uncertainty as to the fate of their comrades, which reminds us of that in the *Æneis*, which I will give in the elegant version of my father, the Revd. Dr. Symmons :

' Their anxious talk dilates
 On the dark subject of their comrades' fates ;
 In doubt 'twixt hope they fluctuate and despair
 If yet their friends may breathe the vital air ;
 Or if o'erwhelm'd beneath the stormy deep,
 No more to hear their comrades' voice, they sleep.'

There is also something that reminds us of the landing in Shakspeare's *Tempest* : as does the beautiful description, in that play, of Miranda and Prospero at sea in the crazy bark, recal similar images in the similar situation of Danaë and her infant son, in the admired Ode of Simonides.

By Jove's contrivances, not minded yet
The noble race of Atreus to destroy;
We still may nourish hopes he yet will come
Safe to his native home. And now, my friend,
Thou hast heard all, and all thou hast heard is true.

[*Exit* HERALD.]

CHORUS.

When was it, and who gave that truest name
 (Was it some mysterious one unseen,
 Provident of coming fate?)
 To Helen, brand of war, and fierce Contention's bride?
 Helen she rightly was, and eke
 Helandros and Heleptolis,¹
 When she, the fair fatality
 Of ships, of warriors, and of rampired towns,
 From her curtain'd chamber fled,
 And her golden bridal bed,

¹ To understand this play upon words the reader need only be told that Helen means, or may mean, 'destroyer of ships;' Helandros, 'destroyer of men;' and Heleptolis, 'destroyer of cities.' The Greek tragedians, in their gravest and most tragic passages, never omitted an opportunity given them of this play upon words. Edipus, in the midst of a scene of breathless anxiety, and at the eve of the denouement of a horrible catastrophe, is reminded of the derivation of his name, even by the slave who was trembling at the violence of his passion, and who was not in a state, poor man, to think of punning. The names of Polynices, Apollo, Zethus, underwent the same analysis. It may at first excite our surprise that these writers, who so religiously abstain from any mixture of comedy or buffoonery, should in this solitary instance have affected what we should call punning. But a nearer view of the subject will teach us that they intended nothing jocular, and that they had in view the doctrines of some mysterious and Pythagorean philosophy, which inculcated that the giving of names, indicative of the destiny of individuals, was a matter of predestination. Plato, in his Cratylus, full of false and fanciful etymologies, dwells largely and gravely on this subject.

Where, all hid, the beauteous queen
 Lay in damask'd bowers unseen;
 And spread her flying sails,
 Fann'd by Zephyr's buxom gales:
 And many proud shield-bearing men,
 Hunters on the glass-wave track
 Of her evanescent oars,
 Landed on Simois' bosky banks,
 For bloody conflict rife.

ANTISTROPHE.

To Iliou came the wedlock-woe,¹
 So rightly named, and heavenly wrath
 Struck out the doom complete,
 And sent down vengeance sure, though late,
 (For Jove dishonour'd and the Xenian board)
 Upon their heads, who sung so sweet²

¹ I have been obliged to make this compound word to express *Kῆδος*, which means both in the Greek. The poet still harps on the fatality of the name.

² To vindicate my own version I must observe that I have followed the reading of all the editions, *τίοντας*. To read *τίοντες*, with Schutz, Butler, and Blomfield, would indeed make a great difference; for then it would be Jove who did great honour to the nuptials of Helen, and not the bridegroom. For it is quite clear that it is not marriage in general, but that particular wedding, which is meant by the poet, from what follows. But why should Jove do great honour to a wedding of which he is represented as the abhorrer and avenger? I can easily conceive how the bridegroom and persons engaged could be said to celebrate this wedding with great pomp (for that is the meaning of *ἐκφάτως τίοντας*), and sing the hymeneal song; but I really cannot see how

The bridal song, the serenade of eve,
 Hymen, O Hymen! whilst they sung
 With wanton pomp and Asian revelry,
 Young bridemen round the bridegroom's blissful bower.
 But now King Priam's city old
 Has changed that song to other notes,
 'Tis turn'd to weeping all and loud lament:
 Paris, oft thy name she calls,
 Spouse of disaster, spouse of woe,
 Who hast laid her towers so low:
 She, that old city, which has stood
 The shock of many a woe-revolving year,
 And seen her bulwarks' guardians fall
 Round her sad ensanguined wall.

STROPHE 2.

That prince a dangerous lion-cub
 Nursed in his palace, wean'd with care,
 In his tender infant years
 Milk-loving, innocent, and fond,

such duties should devolve on Jove. Dr. Blomfield says there is no sense in it as it stands. Why, what sense does he give these words applied to Jove? Do not the words *ἐν φάτῳς τιόντας ὑμέναιον* mean 'celebrating the nuptial song with great pomp?' as Stanley has it, 'in eos qui sponsorum in honorem fictum canticum supra modum celebraverant hymenæum.' As to the double accusative following *πρασσομένη*, 'nemo est quem morabitur duplex accusatio, nisi qui in his literis planè hospes sit.'

Caress'd, beloved by all the young and old :
 Oft cradled in their fondling arms,
 Like a nursling babe he lay.

But time advanced, and greater grown,
 He show'd the nurture of his horrid blood,
 And the fell parents' manners whence he sprang :
 For, bad return for all his fost'rer's care,
 He mid the woful slaughter'd sheep
 Feasted high, though no one bid,
 While the house ran red with blood !
 And the great monster, with his ravening jaws,
 Those trembling inmates pale
 With horror eyed, nor to encounter dared.
 And so by Heaven's decree they found
 A priest of Até in their house was bred.

STROPHE 3.

When first she came to Ilion's towers¹
 O what a glorious sight, I ween, was there !

¹ Potter has mistaken this passage :

‘ Soft gales obedient on her wait,
 And pant on the delighted sea.’

These are pretty lines, but they are not the Poet's, who is not describing Helen's voyage, and the gales and sea, but Helen's beauty. He says that the expression of her face (*φρόνημα*) was that of a summer calm. In the hardihood of his metaphorical language and the fire of his genius, he says literally ;

The tranquil beauty of the 'gorgeous queen
 Hung soft as breathless summer on her cheeks,
 Where on the damask sweet the glowing Zephyr slept;
 And like an idol beaming from its shrine,
 So o'er the floating gold around her thrown
 Her peerless face did shine;
 And though sweet softness hung upon their lids,
 Yet her young eyes still wounded where they look'd.
 She breathed an incense like Love's perfumed flower,
 Blushing in sweetness; so she seem'd in hue,
 And pained mortal eyes with her transcendant view:
 E'en so to Paris' bed the lovely Helen came.
 But dark Erinnys, in the nuptial hour,
 Rose in the midst of all that bridal pomp,
 Seated midst the feasting throng,
 Amidst the revelry and song;
 Erinnys, led by Xenius Jove,
 Into the halls of Priam's sons,
 Erinnys of the mournful bower,
 Where youthful brides weep sad in midnight hour.

' this face of summer calm, this soft and meek looking idol gorgeous with gold, this heart-sickening flower of love, came to the city of Ilion.' This passage presents a complicated example of the construction in periphrasis, παρακλίσουσα agreeing with the neuters that precede it. In this passage παραυτά, a rare word, occurs in a frag. of Eur. ap. Stob. cxii. παραυτά δ' ἡσθάλς ἵστικτον στίβιαι θεῶν.

ANTISTROPHE 3.

'Twas said of old, and men maintain it still,
 Fortune, how great soe'er, is never crown'd,
 But when the great possessor, at the close
 Of earthly grandeur, leaves an heir behind,
 And sinks not childless to his grave.¹
 But then they say it often haps
 Fortune will wither on the father's grave,
 And though his race was blest before,
 'Twill bud with sorrows weeping sore,
 And never ending once begun.
 But I think not, as think the crowd :
 The impious doer still begets
 A brood of impious doers more,
 Children and heirs of all his wicked deeds :
 Whilst from the house of righteous men,
 Who even-handed justice love,
 Comes a long line of children good and fair.

STROPHE 4.

Foul Villany, that wanton'd in its day,²
 Now its old crimes by time are half effaced,

¹ This sentiment occurs commonly. Menander ap. Stob. lxxiii.

Ὀδυσσεὺς ἴσται εὐτυχούνα τῷ βίῳ

ἔχειν ἔφημον διαδόχου τὴν οἰκίαν.

² The Chorus here moralizes, and dwells on the consequences to succeeding generations of the crimes of their predecessors. He traces as it were a moral succession, handed down from father to son, where one transgression begets

Still reproduces others fresh and young,
 In generations new of wicked men;
 And brings its horrid progeny to light,
 Born now or then, when comes the hour,
 Born at a birth with infant Wrath,
 And that great demon, heav'n-detested fiend,
 Hight Hardihood or Thrasos bold,
 And blackest woes of cypress hue,
 In gloomy likeness of their parents drear,
 Woes, that on mansions proud let fall
 The funeral pall.

another as its inevitable result. The first parent stock was 'Hybris,' a spirit of insolence or insubordination breaking out into acts of outrage, the forerunner of every calamity in a Grecian republic, against which the philosophers and tragedians largely declaimed. They denounced it as well from a principle of policy as a sentiment of religion. In short, the poet treats here of the moral concatenation of cause and effect, the consequences to the descendants of their progenitors' misconduct, operating either by the force of example, or of hereditary disposition, which, in the mind of the Chorus, produces the effects of an irresistible fatality. Euripides, in his play of *Her. Fur.* in a strain something similar, says, 'when the foundation of a family is not laid down well, it follows of necessity that the descendants should be unfortunate.'

Ὅταν δὲ κρηπίς μὴ καταβληθῇ γένους

Ὁρθῶς, ἀνάγκη δυστυχεῖν τοὺς ἐκγόρους.

To show the importance, in the eyes of the Athenians, of this spirit of Hybris, we may refer to the circumstance of an altar being erected to the personification of this moral quality. See *Clem. Alex. Protr.* 16. ed. *Mor.* ὡς περ ἀμέλει καὶ Ἐπιμενίδης ὁ παλαιὸς ἑτάρειος καὶ Ἀγαιδείας βωμοὺς ἀναστήσας Ἀθήνησι. This word 'Hybris' had also a legal and definite meaning, there being laws expressly about it, as well as tribunals to judge it. What we call 'Assault and battery' (*αἰκία*) was tried before the tribunal of the 'Forty:' ἑβρης (outrage, including what we call 'Mayhem,') was judged by the court of the *Thesmothetae*. See *Dem. c. Pant.* 976. ed. *R.*

ANTISTROPHE 4.

But Justice sheds her peerless ray
 In low-roof'd sheds of humble swain,
 And gilds the smoky cots where low-lived virtue dwells :
 But with averted eyes
 The maiden Goddess flies
 The gorgeous halls of state, sprinkled with gold,¹
 Where filthy-handed Mammon dwells :
 She will not praise what men adore,
 Wealth sicklied with false pallid ore,
 Though drest in pomp of haughty power,
 But still leads all things on, and looks to the last hour.

¹ χρυσόπαστα in the original, which I have rendered literally : Milton has adopted the expression, *Par. Lost*, B. 3.

———— wings he wore

Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

He has also 'beamear'd with gold.' The metaphor 'Sown with gold' occurs in Lucian *Περὶ οἴκου*. Οὐδ' ἄργον ἐνταῦθα τὸν χρυσὸν τῷ λοιπῷ κόσμῳ σπασσπαρμένον.

Enter AGAMEMNON, CASSANDRA, CHORUS.

CHORUS.

O King! O sacker of Troy town divine!
Sprung from Atreus' godlike line,
How shall I speak thee? how adore,
Not wheeling short, nor passing o'er
The mark of joy that fits thy ear,
Me to speak, and thee to hear?
What crowds of men do vizors wear,
And only show an outside fair,
Careless of virtue and of truth;
Such false ones bear their ready ruth
To whom Misfortune has laid low,
And bear him fellowship in woe,
Yet feel not inward sorrow's smart,
Eater of the woful heart;
So in good fortune look they glad,
And force to smiles their faces sad.
But the good swain, who knows his sheep,
Will still his looks upon them keep,
Nor let those false eyes him betray,
Glist'ring with a wat'ry ray,

Whose beam but only seems to part
 From a friendly, honest heart.
 But O my prince! (I will not seek
 To hide aught from thee, but will speak)
 When first thou didst that muster make
 Of armed men, for Helen's sake,
 Setting all our youth on fire
 With boldness and unwilling ire,
 Wafting o'er that mighty host,
 Who seem'd all dead men to us lost,
 You then look'd ugly to our view,
 Like picture drawn by hand untrue,¹
 Or like a pilot bad, who guides
 His helm askant in dangerous tides.
 But now the toil is gladly o'er,
 We hail thee victor on our shore,
 Not with a shallow, dimpling joy,
 But with true love, without alloy.
 Look around thee; time will show
 Who are thy honest liegemen true,
 And who perversely in this realm
 In thy absence held the helm.

¹ The original *κάρ' ἀπομόσως ἦσθα γεγραμμένος*, 'you were in our eyes like a badly drawn picture,' Potter has rendered, 'Notes other than of music echo'd wide.'

AGAMEMNON.

By your leave, lords, first Argos I salute,
 And of this land the Gods indigenous,
 Who shed their blessings on my safe return,
 And gave to justice Troy's beleaguer'd town.
 The cause was open'd in the skies above;
 The mighty judges heard the tongueless plea,¹
 And cast their ballots in the stedfast urn,
 Not one, but all: the urn was full of blood,
 And doom of man and Ilium's heavy fall.
 The urn on the other side the hall was void;
 Hope stood beside it, yet no hand did stir
 To cast a pebble in its hollow side.
 Ye may now see the captive city far
 In smoke discernible: its embers burn.
 The hurricane of Atè scarce is spent:

¹ This alludes to trials at Athens, where the jury voted by putting their ballots into one of two urns, accordingly as they acquitted or condemned. Patrocles apud Stob. cx.

Καὶ νῦν τὰ δεινὰ ταῦτα καὶ τὰ πολλὰ ἔπη
 Εἰς ὧδὲ μικρὸν τεῦχος ἠθροισεν τύχη.

The line in the original, Ἐπὶ προσήει χεῖρς οὐ πληρουμένης has afforded much scope for the ingenuity of the critics to explain or emend the word χεῖρς. I have no doubt there is a slight corruption here, and for it I propose to read χρεῖς (destitute) which might easily have been changed into χεῖρς by the omission of ρ and replacing it above in this manner, χ^ρεῖς, which from the pen of a subsequent transcriber became χεῖρς, instead of χρεῖς. The word occurs Eur. Androm. frag. Ἐλευθερος δὲ χρεῖς ὧν ὠδὲν σθένει, and more than once in Æsch. Supp.

The ashes pale laid on their fever'd bed,
Together with the dying city die,
And gather up their latest breath to blow
Clouds of rich freightage to the vasty skies !¹
For this we are your debtors, mighty Gods,
And we must pay you with a mindful heart,
And celebration of recording rites,
For our great hunters' toils with cunning hand
Laid to our hearts' content, and haughty Troy
(All for a woman lost) razed to the ground ;
Bearing the Argive dragon when the Horse
Yean'd in the city its terrific birth,
Who bounding burst, with helm and high-tost shield
Brandish'd in air, horrific on the night,
The Pleiads setting in their paly spheres ;
And the fierce lion made a bound in air,
And high o'er tower and temple rampant came,
And with red jaws lick'd up the blood of kings.
Though thus my soul has open'd to the Gods,
With whom I have stood preluding, yet, my friends,
I hold your words in mem'ry, and your thoughts
Are but the fellows of the thoughts I breathe.
My tongue, my heart joins with thee : 'tis too true
How few have that congenial happy spirit

¹ Meaning the wealth of that great city consuming by fire, and vanishing in smoke.

To brook the elevation e'en of friends,
 When blest and glorious, without Envy's pang :
 For Envy, like a poison at the heart,
 Sits doubly loading the diseased wretch :
 First, his own woes, which life has put upon him,
 Seem no small burden, which he scarce can bear ;
 Then, when his eyes look outward on the world,
 The happiness which smiles at others' gates
 Makes him sigh deeper than another's glad.
 Well may I say it, for I long have mark'd
 Life's raree-show before me in a mirror¹
 Reflected to my eyes ; there I have sat
 Musing to mark the shadows as they pass'd,
 And saw that those who seem'd my warmest friends
 Were, like the rest, but images of shades ;
 Only Ulysses, who sail'd 'gainst his will,
 Was, when his harness once was on his back,
 A steady yokemate, drawing by my side
 With all alacrity, fast bound unto me ;
 Such was he, and such is, if still he lives ;
 But I may now be talking of the dead.
 Alas ! I know not. Now for what remains

¹ In the original οὗ γὰρ ἐξεκίσταμαι ἐμιλλας κάτοπτρον. In my translation I have kept these two last words joined together, not separated by punctuation. It is Terence's 'inspicere in speculum vitæ.'

Concerning or the Gods or this the state,
Holding a general meeting of the realm,
In solemn council high and full debate
We will take counsel, and so order all things ;
That that which now stands well may well continue
In perpetuity, and whatsoe'er
Asks medicine, like skilful leeches, we
May minister unto it : as they cut
And burn to cure, not pain, e'en so may we
Strive to keep sickness from the public weal.
But now straight entrance to the house I'll make,
There to pour out the gladness of my soul
Before the hearths unto my household Gods,
Who gave me conduct to far distant climes,
And now return me to their sacred domes ;
And may firm Victory abide for aye,
Since hitherto my steps she has attended.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA (meeting AGAMEMNON).

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Men of this city! Senators of Argos!
 To show a wife's fond tenderness before ye
 I will not blush, for long I've known ye, lords,
 And Shame, that bears its colours red at first,
 Turns by decay of time to sere hue.
 Self-taught in sorrow's book for many a year,
 Whilst he at Troy was warring, I perused it,
 And now can tell its heavy sad contents.
 Gods! what's a woman left without her lord?
 She in her solitary chamber pines
 In a dull trance of melancholy grief:
 Her ears are startled at each growing breeze,
 And messengers arriving pale her cheeks!
 Out! how the screech-owls scream'd around my house!
 Bad was the first¹ who came at matin tide;

¹ In the Greek:

Καὶ τὸν μὲν ἤκουν, τὸν δ' ἐπισφίρειν κακοῦ
 Κάκιον ἄλλο πῆμα, λάσκοντας δόμοις.

Nothing can be plainer: one messenger comes; another after him brings in the tidings of bad news, worse than the bad (brought in by the first); λάσκοντας, of course, applies to both. How Dr. Blomfield can separate

Another follow'd e'er the sun was set,
 And brought me heavier tidings than the first.
 Fame to his house came busy in each breeze;
 Fame told his wounds. Oh! if her tale were true,
 Punch'd as a net must my lord's body be:
 Or if he died as oft as tongues announced,
 'Tis a new story of King Geryon old,¹

τὸν μὲν from *ἔκειν*, and τὸν δὲ from *ἐπισφίρειν*, I cannot conceive; nor how he can be satisfied with the sense arising from such punctuation. What? would Clytemnestra tell her husband to his face, in a studied and affected recital of her unhappiness during his absence, that one of her causes of misery was the arrival of a messenger with news that *he* was coming? A strange compliment, or rather piece of sincerity, to escape her lips! and again, of another messenger's arriving with news that Cassandra was coming: a most strange and injudicious topic to select for one like Clytemnestra, even had it been possible for her to have heard of it; but the poet *has made* it impossible, by representing the return of Agamemnon to have taken place *instantly* on the taking of Troy, and it is well known that Cassandra did not fall into his possession till that event.

¹ For the clearer understanding this passage, I shall transcribe Potter's judicious note, which, as well as his translation, shows his right understanding of the passage. 'Geryon was a king of Spain, killed by Hercules, fabled to have had three bodies. Clytemnestra compares her husband to this giant, and says, that if he had been slain as often as reported, this second triple Geryon (meaning Agamemnon under that name, for it were *onibus* to talk of the dead) might well boast to have received his triple vest, meaning his three bodies, and to have died once in each shape. Mr. Heath might never have heard that Geryon, though he had three bodies, died more than once, nor does Pauw say it; but this does not hinder Clytemnestra from making the supposition, and nothing more is intended: the words of Æschylus are express.' Dr. Blomfield has vitiated this passage by a wrong punctuation and interpretation: *Χλαῖνα τρίμοιρος*; must mean the body of the giant, and can by no means be understood of the earth which covered him.

Who had three bodies, and as many lives :
 Geryon is dead, and sleeps below the ground :
 Boast thou hast got the mantle, good my lord,
 Of that three-formed giant's thrice-slain corse.
 'Twas for such woful rumours that my neck
 Was oft entrammell'd in high hanging ropes,
 As oft released by their kind force who took me,
 Spite of myself, and forced me back to life.
 For this, e'en now, there stands not by my side,
 As now he should be in this presence here,

To talk of a *three-fated* vest of earth, meaning a sepulture, would, in English, be rank nonsense ; and I am afraid that *χθονὸς ΤΡΙΜΟΙΡΟΝ χλαῖναν*, so construed, would deserve no better name in Greek. If this passage required further illustration, which I should think superfluous, it may be remarked that *πολλὴν χλαῖναν* is not to be rendered 'multam chlënam,' but 'magnam chlënam.' The Schol. on the first line of Euripides' Hippolytus, gives this sense: *Πολλὴ μεγάλη, σεμνὴ, θαυμαστὴ*. In the same way *ὀλγός* stands for *μικρός*, in Homer's *ὀλγῃ τράπεζα*, and in the line which Aristotle comments on, *ἢ δὲ μ' ὀλγός τε καὶ οὐτιδανός καὶ θικυς*. Now suppose the poet had expressed himself thus, which he might, *Τρισώματος τῶν Γηρυῶν ὁ δέσποτος Πολλὴν τρίμοιρον χλαῖναν ἐξηύχει λαβών*. The meaning, I presume, would have been obvious, and the sense complete : still more plain, though less poetical, had it been *μεγάλην*, and so Clytemnestra was on the point of uttering it ; but having called her husband Geryon (the name of a dead man), struck with the omen, according to the superstition of that day, and perhaps starting at the consciousness of her own guilty thoughts, she instantly apologizes in the parenthetical line, *ἄνωθεν, τὸν πάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω*. Besides, in matter of taste, can any thing be more frigid than this interment of the giant? for the critic not only buries him, but calculates with mathematical precision the quantity of earth that it took to cover him, without reckoning the quantity that lay under him. For the reputed monuments of Geryon, and his gigantic bones discovered in a 'tumulus,' see Pausanias' Attica.

A boy,¹ the treasure-keeper of the loves
 'Twixt me and thee, Orestes. Marvel not:
 He is in nursing safe beneath the roof
 Of our kind foreign host,² the Phocian Strophius;
 Who with forecast of thought, in large discourse
 Which took two bearings, set two woes before me
 In double perspective, wherein I saw
 Thy perils imminent in Trojan fields,
 And all at home in stormy anarchy;
 The senate overthrown,³ and the wild people

¹ Query, is not the idea of the original *ἱμῶν τε καὶ σὺν κύριος πιστευμάτων* that of Beaumont's *Prophetess*, Act 5?

‘ Our children,
 The double heirs both of our forms and *faiths*.’

² Δορύξινος. This word seems used here for *πρόξινος* or *ιδρύξινος*, and not in its strict sense. Plutarch, Q. G. xvii. pretends to give the origin of this term from a piece of very ancient Greek history, or tradition, of an old civil war of the Megareans, which was conducted with such singular humanity and courtesy on each side that the prisoners were instantly dismissed on their *parole* to return with their ransom, which *parole* was never broken; and they were courteously styled *δορύξиноι*, and not *δοριάλωτοι*, that is, ‘ friends made in war,’ not ‘ prisoners of war.’

³ Βουλὴν καταρρίπτειν. This, I contend with Stanley, Schutz, and Butler, to mean ‘ overthrowing the senate or council of state.’ Who ever heard that Βουλὴν καταρρίπτειν meant ‘ *consilium inire*?’ Who ever heard of βόλον καταρρίπτειν? it would be, in Greek, βόλον ῥίπτειν or καταρρίπτειν, ἀνερίφθω κύβος or ἐρίφθω κύβος indiscriminately, but not καταρρίφθω. As to the anachronism of a senate at Argos in those days, it is notorious that the Attic tragedians committed many of the same description, applying to the times of the Trojan war the language and customs, &c. of their own time. But why might not Æschylus imagine a βουλὴ γεράντων to assist

Trampling the fortunes of our sinking house ;
 For still, he said, men have that planted in them,
 They tread upon the wretched as he falls,
 And add their spites to him whom fortune spites.
 Such was the drift of his discourse which sway'd me,
 And sure it bears no hollowness : meantime
 The gushing fountains, whence so many tears
 Chasing each other trickled on my cheeks,
 Are quite run out, and left without a drop ;
 And these sad eyes, which so late took their rest,
 Are stain'd with blemish by late watching hours,
 Weeping for thee by the pale midnight lamp,
 That burnt unheeded by me. In my dreams
 I lay, my couch beset with visions sad,
 And saw thee oft in melancholy woe !
 More than the waking Time could show, I saw
 A thousand dreary congregated shapes,
 And started oft, the short-lived slumber fled,
 Scared by the night-fly's solitary buzz :
 But now my soul, so late o'ercharged with woe,
 Which had all this to bear, is now the soul
 Of one who has not known what mourning is,

Clytemnestra in the cares of government? and do not the Chorus, in the opening of the play, consider themselves in that light, calling themselves
ἄπλως γαίας μονόφρουρον ἔρνος?

And now would fain address him thus, e'en thus :
This is the dog who guards the wattled fold ;
This is the mainsheet which the sails and yards
Of some tall ship bears bravely to the winds ;
This is the pillar whose long shaft from earth
Touches the architrave of some high house ;
A child who is the apple of the eye
To the fond father who has none but him ;
Ken of the speck of some fair lying land,
Seen by pale seamen well nigh lost to hope ;
A fair day, sweetest after tempest showers ;¹
A fountain fresh, with crystal running clear,
To the parch'd traveller who thirsts for drink :
So in each shift of sad necessity
'Tis sweet to be deliver'd hard beset.
Thus my fond heart, with speeches such as these,
Pays to his worthiness what she thinks due :
Let no one grudge me the sweet pleasure now,

¹ See in Milton's *Paradise Regained*, 4th Book, a description of a fine morning after a night of tempest :

And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant or dropping tree ; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storms so ruinous,
Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn.

But think upon the sorrows I have borne.
But now, O thou most precious to my eyes !
Light from thy car : but soft ; step not on earth,
Lay not thy foot, O king ! Troy's overturner,
On the bare ground. Why dally ye, my women,
Who have 't in charge, by my command, to lay
The field with tapestry whereon he walks ?
Quick strew it, cover it ; let all the road
Be like a purple pavement to the house,
That Dicè to his house may lead him on
As the unhopèd-for comer should be led :
My care, that sleeps not, shall do all the rest ;
Do all that duty at my hand requires,
If Gods will hear me, and the Fates allow.

AGAMEMNON.

Daughter of Leda, guardian of my house !
Well hast thou spoken, as a true wife should,
And my long absence has deserved long welcome :
But praise with justice link'd bears honour with it ;
But 'tis an honour we can't give ourselves,
And is no honour but from others' mouths.
Besides, pry'thee, use not too fond a care
To me, as to some virgin whom thou strivest
To deck with ornaments, whose softness looks
Softer hung round the softness of her youth.

Ope not the mouth to me, nor cry amain
As at the footstool of a man of th' East
Prone on the ground ; so stoop thou not to me :
Nor be the minister to gain me grudge,
Preparing ways of envy for my feet,
As now thou hast this road with garments strew'd :
With such as these our holy duty bids us
Find pageantries to honour Gods withal.¹
A being, as I am, but of to-day,
To walk in such high state bedizen'd out
With flaunting purples, studiously devised
With quaint embroidery, beneath my feet—
Not without fears and terrors could I do it !
According to a man's height, not a God's,
Take measure of the duty thou would'st pay me.
Though not on purple rests she her bare feet,
Nor yet with cloth of gold is cover'd o'er,
Fame is heard far and wide—so loud she cries.
To be possess of that clear soul within
That thinks no folly, but is wise and meek,
Is the most precious jewel God can give :

¹ It is well known that to this day in catholic countries it is the practice to spread the streets with tapestry on the procession of the Host. This entry of Agamemnon must have produced a fine spectacle on the stage. His piety, magnanimity, and modesty require no comment.

And blazon not the happiness of man
 Till he has ended life, still ever blest
 In that sweet state which fixed to the end
 Stands like a constant summer all his days.
 Let me speed thus hereafter in all things¹
 As well as up to now, my soul will be
 Full of a happy confidence serene.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Yet say not so; thwart not my purpose so.

¹ The original is, *Εἰ πάντα δ' ὥς πράσσοιμι' ἄν, εὐθαρσῆς ἐγώ*. I have followed the common reading (would there were none in Æschylus more corrupt!), and have translated accordingly. But Dr. Blomfield has edited the line thus: *Εἰ πάντα δ' ὥς πράσσοιμι' ἄνευ θάρσους ἐγώ*, interpreting it, 'Utinam sic omnia faciam modestè ac sine audaciâ'—which reading appears to me objectionable on many grounds, both as to the sense and the language. *Εἰ*, to express a wish, should be followed by *γάρ*, or *μοι*, or *τε*. *Πράσσω ὥς* means, to *speed* thus, not to *act* thus; so *πράσσω εὖ*, *καλῶς*, *κακῶς* have in Attic writers that particular meaning. The construction and meaning is different with other words, as in *Androm.* 824, *Πράξασα δεινὰ*, and *Suppl.* 265, *Οὐδ' εἴτι πράξας μὴ καλῶς εὐρίσκομαι*, and in *Antiph. ap. Stob.* lxxxix.

Ὅταν εὐπορῶν τις αἰσχροῦ πράττει πράγματα
 τί τοῦτον ἀπορήσαντ' ἂν οὐκ οἶσι ποιεῖν.

The objection raised to the use of *εἰ ἄν* with the optative, appears groundless; *εἰ ἄν* gives a future sense to the optative. *Εἴκε* is constantly used with an optative by Homer, Pindar, and Apollonius Rhodius. So *ὅτε ἄν* is used with an optative in Æsch. *Pers.* 450, *ὅτ' ἄν νεῶν φθαρέντες ἐχθροὶ νῆσον ἐκωλύατο*. Indeed, this construction is mentioned by an old grammarian in Bekker's *Anecdota*, 144. The use of *εἰ ἄν* with an optative may be also defended by two passages from Demosthenes: see *Dem. c. Steph.* 1115. ed. Reiske. *Εἰ ἴδσιντ' ἄν*, and *Dem. c. Apat.* 903. Reiske. *Εἰ δ' ὁ Παρμίων δικάϊτερ' ἂν φαίνοιτο λέγων*.

AGAMEMNON.

My purpose, too, is fix'd, be well assured,
And stands in colours thou wilt ne'er efface.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Hadst thou in peril pray'd to Gods, to be
As now thou art, thy fondest prayer had been.

AGAMEMNON.

If man e'er of his purpose knew the end,
So know I mine ; and knowing, I have spoke.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Supposing Priam now had sped as you,
What think you then his carriage would have been ?

AGAMEMNON.

Belike he would have gone array'd in state
On purple tapestry.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Then be not thou

A blusher fearful of the people's blame,
The breath of mortals.

AGAMEMNON.

Yet what people speak

In common fame, the whispers of the crowd,
Carries a mighty import.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Yet bethink thee

The quiet man, whom none bears malice to,
Is mean and low, not raised high envy's mark.

AGAMEMNON.

A woman, and enamour'd of a fray!
'Tis not a woman's longing, nor her part.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

The great debating with the humbler man
May yield the day, and look more beauteous for it.¹

AGAMEMNON.

What! in this war would'st thou so have the day,—
To be the conqueress would it please thee so?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

O be persuaded! Soft let go thy might;
Give me the vict'ry of thy own free gift.

AGAMEMNON.

Well, since it is your pleasure, quickly some one
Take off the pride of sandals from my feet,
Thralls of the haughty treading, lest the grudge
Of some god's eye throw its long cast upon me,
Walking in sandals on the work of looms
Dipt in sea grain; for 'tis a mighty shame
To bring a house to ruin, and to be

¹ The same sentiment, but applied to differences between parents and children, occurs in Antiph. ap. Stob. lxxvii.

τοῦ γὰρ πατρὸς κρατεῖν μὲν αἰσχύνῃ φέρεται,
'Ἡσσημένῳ δὲ δόξα νικητήριος.

A waster, who with proud feet spoils the wealth
 Strew'd on his floor, and tissues silver-worth.
 Thus far for this. Give entrance, too, I pray thee,
 Unto this stranger maiden, graciously

[*Showing CASSANDRA.*

Inclining thee unto her. God beholds
 The gentle ruler governing with mildness
 His subject slaves, well pleased with far off ken :
 For none would be a chooser so to choose,
 Or put the slave's yoke on except perforce :
 And so this maiden, choicest of choice spoils,
 A flower in the division rarest deem'd,
 Set by from many treasures, was made mine
 By th' army's gift, and thus in company
 Hither has follow'd me : but now, since I
 Touching these matters, am become thy thrall
 To hearken to thy voice, straight onward now
 I will unto the mansions of the house
 Move, footing it on purples as I go.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Who'll quench that sea, which gives us plenteous store
 Of beaming purples from her azure caves,
 Eternal dyer¹ of the blood-red robes,

¹ *ισάργυρον* (happily introduced for *εἰς ἄργυρον* by Salmasius, Exerc. Plin. p. 418), 'worth its weight in silver;' so *ισόχρυσος*, 'worth its weight in gold,' in the humorous line of Archestratus in Athen. vii. 305. *τὸν κάπρον*

That sparkle o'er the silver's paly shine?
 Thy house, O King, has plenteous store of these;
 'Tis no poor house, blest be the gracious Gods!
 These gorgeous robes were dust beneath my feet,¹
 When deep in domes oracular I pray'd,
 Kiss'd the pale shrines, and pour'd forth many a vow
 To give the Gods all I could give, in barter
 Of their kind grace to save a life so dear!
 The root is living, and the laurel thrives,
 And makes a sweet walk for us under shade,
 When the hot dog-star rages in the skies.
 The lord is come! the household hearth burns bright,

ἂν ἰσθῆς, ὧν καὶ μὴ κατάλειπε, Κᾶν ἰσχύρσας ἔη. Κηκίδα παγκαλίστον. Κηκίς is, properly, what oozes out, from κηκίω; hence what exudes from trees, and the galls of oaks, used for dyeing, are so called. Κηκίδα πορφύρας is here, the blood of the purple fish, or the exudation; as κυπαρισσίνη κηκίς is the gum of the cypress tree. Lucian. Tragopod. Κυπαρισσίνην κηκίδα, γόριν κριθίνην. Κηκίς was the common name at Athens for 'dyer's stuff.' Demosthenes reckons it amongst his father's stock in trade, valuing it, with the copper, at upwards of 200%. Κηκίδα δὲ καὶ χαλκὸν ἑβδομήκοντα μυνῶν ἰωνή-μεινα. Dem. c. Aphob. 816. Reiske.

¹ More literally, Clytemnestra says here, that in her fervent prayers and vows for the safe return of her husband, she would (if it had been revealed to her such was the pleasure of the Gods) have vowed many a procession, or many fine robes to be trampled under foot. Dejanira in the same manner tells Lichas, with a charming simplicity, she had made a vow to the Gods, when she heard of her husband's safe return, to dress him for sacrifice in a new robe.

Στείλει χιτῶνι τῷδε καὶ φαεῖν θεοῖς
 Θυτῆρα καινῷ καινὸν ἐν πεπλώματι.

And merrily the winter days we pass.
And now the pale grapes turn to luscious wine,
The vintage comes, Jove treads the purple vat ;
We joy beneath the noontide air imbrown'd,
Stretch'd in cool zephyrs under bower and hall,
And sweetly live ! Our lord he is at home !
A man in prime, frequenting his glad halls.
Jove ! Jove ! thou perfect and perfecting one,
Perfect my prayers, and whatsoe'er to do
Thou hast in hand, to do it be thy care.¹

[*Exeunt.*

¹ This speech of Clytemnestra is very sublime and characteristic. There is something grand in the manner she treats the profusion of cost in the pageant she had prepared. Her speech is an ebullition of joy and exultation, ostensibly indeed for her husband's return, but really because her victim was now almost within her grasp ! In the last lines, though they artfully bear a double sense, she shows what are her thoughts !

CHORUS.

Why do these portents flit before my eyes,
 Sights which the ancient soothsayer saw?
 Why does the voice of prophecy arise,
 And fill my soul with awe?
 Why sudden chants within my soul
 That song which ne'er is bought for gold,
 Unorder'd, uncontroll'd,
 And like a prophet speaks, so loud and clear within?
 Nor will Assurance mount his throne,¹
 And make his sov'ran way,
 Like the morn's sun the dreams of night
 Scatters before his orient light,
 When mystery's shadows fade in empty air.
 Why is it so? long time is past²

¹ Φρονὸς φίλον θρόνον, 'My heart's dear throne.' So Shakspeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, 'My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne.'

² In the original thus (Glasgow edition), χρόνος δ' ἐπεὶ Πρυμνησίων ξυνεμβόλοις Ψαμμίας ἀπάτους παρήβησεν, εἴθ' ὑπ' Ἰλίου Ὀρτο ναυδάτας στρατὸς. The difficulty of this passage, which has wonderfully tormented the critics, appears to me to lie in one word, παρήβησεν. Heath, Schutz, and Butler saw the general sense of the passage, and where the fault lay, and proposed to read παρήβην, which is good as to the sense, but questionable as to authority. Read for παρήβησεν, παρέβησεν, and the whole is quite plain: κατὰ δὲ πρυμ-

Since on the sandy shore
 The armed ships their cables cast,
 Waiting to waft the soldiers o'er
 From hence to Ilion's strand.
 And now I see them safe at home,
 My own eyes witness they are come ;
 And yet, I know not how, within
 My ill-presaging soul,
 Of its own free accord,
 Not to the lyre or tuneful chord,
 But to the notes of an Erinnys, sings
 The dirge that round the deadman rings ;
 Nor will my lab'ring heart find rest
 In hope or sweet assurance blest.
 'Tis not for nought my bowels yearn,
 'Tis not for nought within me burn
 Thoughts whose bodings will not fail,
 Whilst my deep-eddying soul
 Goes in a giddy whirlpool round.

νήσι' ἴδυσαν. Hom. Il. A. sub fin. *Μουρόχου δ' ἀκταισιν ἐκδήσαντο πλεῖντας
 πεισμάτων ἀρχάς.* Eur. Hipp. 758. The sense of the passage surely is ob-
 vious: viz. 'It is a long time since the army cast anchor here on their way
 to Troy.' *Χρόνος ἀφ' οὗ* is 'diu est ex quo,' as Stanley has rendered it,
 and *ὤρτο* is 'proficiscebatur,' not 'profectus est.' *Ψαμμίας ἀνάτρους* are the
 ships drawn up on the sands, run aground, according to the custom of those
 days.

For surely Health in the extreme ¹
 Lies on a dangerous boundary ground,
 For her near neighbour stands Disease,
 And both the party-walls against each other lean.
 And many a time the gallant argosie,
 That bears man's destiny with outspread sails
 In full career before the prosp'rous gales,

¹ How finely this thought is given in Shakspeare's *Hamlet*, iv. 7. King to Laertes :

‘ And nothing is at a like goodness still ;
 For goodness, growing to a pleurisy,
 Dies in his own too much.’

For the better understanding this passage, it may be remarked, that the Chorus, though satisfied with his own eyes of the return of Agamemnon, feels within himself unaccountable sensations of the gloomiest kind, and is wrapt up in the gloom of his own apprehensions. He labours under a forced and involuntary inspiration. In his character of a man, and with reference merely to his human faculties, he is described as totally unconscious and unsuspecting of a plot, not only then, but in a subsequent part of the play, where the catastrophe is presented more forcibly to his eyes : but in his character of a prophet, and actuated by a sudden inspiration, he throughout this passage darkly adumbrates the death of Agamemnon. He sees something portending mischief to his king. He imagines his misgivings arise from the instability of human affairs, from the doctrine of extremes meeting (exemplified by the precariousness of excessive health, bordering on disease, and the sudden foundering of a fine ship in full sail). Hence he is agitated with the fear of a reverse in the midst of Agamemnon's glory. Then occurs the possibility of reparation of all worldly losses, fortune, &c. loss of life alone excepted. Having been led to this point by an involuntary train of reflections, here, as it were, he scents the blood, he catches, as it were, a glimpse behind the curtain, when all of a sudden it drops, and leaves him in darkness, amidst the embers of his expiring inspiration.

Strikes on a hidden rock,
 And founders with a hideous shock.
 The wealthy house on shipwreck's brim
 With measured sling may overboard
 Some of its precious burden fling,
 But sinks not down itself brimful of woe;
 For then the gift of Jove two-handed fills
 The yearly furrows, and drives famine off;
 Nature and Jove still walk the eternal round,
 And call new riches from the teeming ground.
 But O! upon the earth, when once is shed
 Black deadly blood of man,
 Who will call up the black blood from the ground
 With moving incantation's charm?
 Check'd not Jove himself the man,¹

¹ Glasgow edition, Οὐδὲ τὸν ἐρθοδαῖ Τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν Ζεὺς αἶτ' ἔπαυσεν.
 Dr. Blomfield's edition, following Hermann, edits it thus: Οὐδὲ τὸν ἐρθοδαῖ
 τ. φ. α. ἐπ' ἀελαθείᾳ Ζεὺς ἄν αἶτ' ἔπαυσεν, with this remark, that the sense
 requires ἄν. Without saying any thing of ἀελαθείᾳ, the authority for which
 rests on much too slender grounds to admit of its introduction to the text, in
 my opinion the sense does not require ἄν, and equally rejects αἶτ'. Jove did
 not kill Æsculapius *twice*, or again. I should read the passage as in the
 Glasgow edition, *only* putting a note of interrogation after ἔπαυσεν, which is
 very material. How strongly the interrogative affirms in these two passages!
 Compare Arist. Aves, 63. Οὐδὲ κάλλιον λέγεις; I should also be tempted to
 read αἶτ' for αἶτ'. For Æsculapius' history see Diod. Sic. iv. 73. and for his
 honours and temples, and a curious criticism on a line of Homer, see Paus. ii.
 c. 26. also for his style of practice, Plato de Rep. 3.

The fate of this first physician upon record is curious: he performed a
 miraculous cure, for which he took a fee; for which he was killed by Jove

The mighty leech, who knew so well the art
To raise the silent dead?

I pause! some Fate from heaven forbids¹
The Fate within me utter more,
Else had my heart outrun my tongue,
And pour'd the torrent o'er.
Silence and darkness close upon my soul,
She roars within, immured,
And in the melancholy gloom
Of dying embers fades away.

with lightning. Clem. Alex. Protr. seems to exult over his unmerited fate: 'Ὁδὲ ἰατρὸς φιλάργυρος ἦν, Ἀσκληπίδης ὄνομα αὐτῷ καὶ σοὶ σὺν βοιώτιον παραθήσομαι ποιητῇ (sequitur ῥῆσις notissima ex Pind. Pyth. de morte Æsculapii) καὶ οὗτος μὲν κίεται κεραυνωθεὶς ἐν ταῖς Κυνοσούριδος ἑρτοῖς.

¹ Εἰ δὲ μὴ τεταγμένα Μοῖρα Μοῖραν ἐκ θεῶν. I have kept the old reading *Μοῖραν*, instead of *Μοῖρα Μοῖρα*. Æschylus is not fond of reduplications in Euripides' style, which are also generally adopted in parts of deep pathos. *Μοῖραν* is the Fate or Spirit which inspires the Chorus, by whom all this ode is uttered, under the influence of a dark inspiration, vaguely and unintelligibly, even to the inspired person, adumbrating the future. Another Fate, ordered by Heaven, interposes, and stops his further utterance. Render *πλῆος φέρειν* 'plus sapere.' The passage most apposite is Soph. *Æd. Tyr.* 500.

Ἀνδρῶν δ' ὅτι μάντις
Πλῆος ἢ γὰρ φέρεται
Κρίσις οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀληθής.

CLYTEMNESTRA, *coming out to order in CASSANDRA, who had not entered in the train of AGAMEMNON, but remained in her chariot during the preceding scene speechless.*

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Go in—go in! Cassandra! thee I mean,
 Enter thou too! since in this mansion Jove
 Has placed thee nothing wrathfully, to share
 With many a slave the lavers, as thou stand'st
 By th' altar of our fortune-giving God.¹
 Come forth from out that wain: neither be thou
 O'erweening, too high-stomach'd for thy lot;
 Such was the lot of great Alcmena's son,
 For so they tell us, once upon a time,
 Patient enduring to be sold a slave;
 And, maugre him, lay hand upon the yoke.
 But if then fortune dip down to this plight
 Of flat necessity, yet still the halls
 Of the old lords and ancient rich men bear
 Full many a grace for serving-men; but they

¹ Κτησίου βωμοῦ. The altar placed in the buttery, or place where provisions were kept, was consecrated to Ctesian Jove, or Jove the Guardian of Property. Dem. c. Mid. 531. Ed. Reiske. Διὶ κτησίῳ βοῦν λευκόν.

Whose hopes were slender, yet a harvest rich¹
 With unexpected foison weighs them down,
 Are sour to slaves in every thing they do,
 And stretch their crude sway e'en beyond the line.
 Not so with us: whatever is the rule,
 And custom orders, you will have it here.

CHORUS.

She ceases speaking, pausing from clear words,
 To thee there, ho! to thee; but O poor hart!
 Lodged as thou art within the fatal toils,
 Come out upon persuasion, if thou'lt be
 Persuaded by me, but perhaps thou art
 All unpersuadable, and wilt not move.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

But sure I do persuade her, and my word
 Holds parley with her mind within, unless
 The language she is mistress of be strange,
 And like the swallow's, a barbarian talk.

CHORUS.

What the queen says, in present tide and time,

¹ This sentiment in disfavour of upstarts, the νέοι of Aristotle, occurs in Eur. apud Stob. iii. Κακοὶ γὰρ ἐμπλησθέντες ἡ νομισματος "Ἡ πόλις ἐμπε-
 σόντες εἰς ἀρχὴν τινὰ Σικριτῶσιν ἀδόνητ' εὐτυχισάντων δόμων. So also Lucian's
 Images: "Ὅπερ οἱ ταπεινοὶ τὰς γνώμας πάσχουσιν ἀπειροκαλῶς τῆς τύχης
 ἐπαιδῶν αὐτοῦς ἢ τύχη μὴδὲν τοιοῦτον ἐλπιδάνας ἄφνω ἀναβιβάσῃ εἰς πτηνὸν τι
 καὶ μετέρσιν ὄχημα.

Is likeliest for thee ; follow, leave the wain ;
O be persuaded ; get up from thy seat.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Nay, standing at the gates, I have no time
To dally with her ; for already now
The sheep are by the altar's midnave flames,
Just on the eve of passing through the fire,
For sure our hopes were blank, and ne'er look'd for
This joyful ceremonial here to hold.
But thou, if thou 'rt about the doing as I bid,
Take no long time in doing it ; but if
Thou understand'st not speech, yet thus speak to us
With inarticulate barbarian¹ hand.

—[Making signs with her hands.

CHORUS.

A clear interpreter methinks she needs,
That stranger maid ! the manner of her bearing
Is, as it were a wild beast's newly caught.

¹ The classical reader need not be informed that this word is not to be taken in its vulgar English sense of 'cruel.' Its strict sense is 'foreign,' 'speaking an unknown tongue,' and of foreigners it generally means the Orientals. Twyne and Phaer (translation of the *Æneid*) use this word classically :

On the other part, with all Barbaria force of divers arms,
Antonius drags his train of nations thick that throngs in swarms.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Why sure she raves, and gives bad sprites an ear,
 She, who so lately from a new-sack'd city
 Comes with its horrors fresh upon her soul;
 She champs and knows not how to bear the bridle,
 Until her bloody mettle's foam'd away.
 Howe'er no more, thus casting words away,
 Will I submit to be dishonour'd so.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

CHORUS.

But I, seeing and pitying her sad plight,
 Will not feel wroth or hasty. O thou sad one!
 Go, go, and let this car stand empty here;
 Yield to thy fate and put on thy new yoke.

CASSANDRA.

Woe, woe, woe, woe! O Earth! O Gods!
 Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS.

What means this? Why for Loxias woe, woe, woe?
 He has no dirgemen; such is not his mood.

CASSANDRA.

O woe, woe, woe! O Earth! O Gods!
 Apollo! Apollo!

CHORUS.

Again she calls upon the God, blaspheming!

Who nothing, nothing has with woe to do,¹
Nor likes him to the dirges to draw near.

CASSANDRA.

Apollo! Apollo!

Aguieus, my Apollo!

Now for the second time thou hast undone me quite.

CHORUS.

She seems about to prophesy, as though
Touching her own misfortunes she would speak:
God dwells within her, though she be a slave!

CASSANDRA.

Apollo! Apollo!

Aguieus, my Apollo!

Ha! where hast thou brought me?

Where am I come? what roofed mansion's this?

CHORUS.

Know'st thou not that? the house of Atreus' sons:
Nay, 'tis e'en so; thou'lt find I tell thee true.

CASSANDRA.

Ha! Ha! that dismal and abhorred house!

¹ So Callimachus beautifully makes even the mourning of Thetis for her son stop when the hymns of Apollo were heard: Οὐδ' ἑτί τις Ἀχιλλῆα κινύρεται αἰδύνα μάτηρ Ὀκπύτ' ἢ παιῶν ἢ παιῶν ἀκούσῃ. In the next line the poet plays upon the meaning of the word Apollo. Plato in Cratylus gives the same etymology from ἀπολλύω, which I could not preserve in English.

The good Gods hate its dark and conscious walls!
 It knows of kinsmen by their kinsmen slain,
 And many a horrid death-rope swung!
 A house,¹ where men like beasts are slain!
 The floor is all in blood!

CHORUS.

The stranger seems sharp-scented like a hound,
 And searches as for bodies she would find!

CASSANDRA.

These are my witnesses! I follow them!
 Phantoms of children! terribly they weep!
 Their throats cut! and the supper that I see
 Of roast flesh smoking, that their father eats!

CHORUS.

We have heard, O prophetess, of thy great name;
 Ay—but we want no prophets in this house.

CASSANDRA.

Alas! ye Gods, what is she thinking on?

¹ Ἄνδρες σφαγίων καὶ πίδον πανθήριον. I am surprised so alight a fault should have been suffered so long to obscure a fine passage. Join these two words, and read ἀνδρσφαγίων, 'a man-shamble-house.' Cassaubon approached very near, who read ἀνδρσφάγιον. It is quite clear from the context that this compound, though perhaps occurring no where else, should be read here: σφαγίων, by itself, means nothing but a 'vas victimarium,' and ἀνδρες, as it is printed singly, can have no meaning: it cannot mean any particular man without the article, and the genius of the Greek language will not allow us to take it in the *singular* for *man* in general.

And what is this that looks so young and fresh?
Mighty, mighty is the load
She is unravelling in these dark halls!
A foul deed for her dear friends plotteth she,
Too sore to bear, and waxing past all cure!
Where's Succour? fled far off! Where's Help? it
stands at bay!

CHORUS.

What means she now? 'twas lately Atreus' feast:
'Tis an old story, and the city's talk.

CASSANDRA.

Alas! ah wretch! ah! what art thou about?
A man's in the bath—beside him there stands
One wrapping him round—the bathing clothes drop,
Like shrouds they appear to me, dabbled in blood!
O for to see what stands there at the end!
Yet 'twill be quick—'tis now upon the stroke!
A hand is stretch'd out—and another too!
As though it were a grasping—look, look, look!

CHORUS.

'Tis yet all dark to me: by riddles posed
I find no way in these blind oracles.

CASSANDRA.

Ha! ha! Alas! alas! what's that?
Is that Hell's dragnet that I see?

Dragnet! or woman? she, the very she
 Who slept beside thee in the midnight bower,
 Wife and murd'ress! Howl, dark quires!
 Howl in timbrel'd anthems dark¹
 For Atreus' deadly line,
 And the stony shower of blood.

CHORUS.

Ye Gods! what vengeance of a Fury's this
 Thou bidst take up her clarion in these halls?
 As I heard thy doleful word,
 Chased is my merry sprite,²
 And trickling up my heart has run
 The blood-drop changed to saffron hue;³

¹ Cassandra here calls to a band or choir, that she sees in her disordered imagination, to howl over the calamities of the house of Atreus. The word is *ορχαίς*, 'a band,' which Potter has unluckily rendered *discord*, thereby losing the effect of a whole legion of sprites. He has also wrongly rendered *επορθίζεις* 'hold their orgies,' instead of 'sound the clarion.'

² *Οὐ με φαιδρύνει λόγος*, 'Non me lætificat sermo,' for so it should be rendered, and not 'scientem facit,' with Dr. Blomfield. It would be very tame to say, in the situation of the Chorus, 'I don't understand you.' *Φαιδρός* is 'merry, cheerful, gay.' Lucian's description of a beautiful woman: *Καὶ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τὸ ὑγρὸν δμα τῷ φαιδρῷ καὶ νεχαρισμένῳ*.

³ The Chorus here expresses his great agitation and horror: his blood not only runs back to his heart, but it changes colour from red to yellow. This is a fine and original mode of expression. The English reader may not be displeased to find the same thought in one of our own poets. We find it

Which from the spear-fallen man
Drops apace upon the ground,
Flitting together with the rays
Of the setting sun of life.

CASSANDRA.

Ha! ha! see there! see there!
Keep the bull from the heifer, drive, drive her away!
The bull is enchafed and hoodwink'd, and roars;

(and where it is also equally original) in Massinger's *Emperor of the East*, Act IV. Scene 4. Theodosius, in the first transports of his rage, cries out,

What an earthquake I feel in me!
And on the sudden my whole fabric totters;
My blood within me turns, and through my veins
Parting with natural redness, I discern it
Changed to a fatal yellow.

Potter has entirely omitted the passage of the fallen warrior, bleeding drop by drop, which is, as it were, introduced in the back-ground by the poet, to aggravate the gloom of the picture. Mr. Twining and Dr. Blomfield have, in my opinion, misconceived the meaning of the word *ξυανύται*, which they render, the one 'dispatch,' and the other 'extinguish,' and couple it, the one with *πτωσίμοις* (read instead of *πτωσίμοις*), and the other with *αὔγαῖς* (read for *αὔγαῖς* of the text). But in my opinion these two readings *πτωσίμοις* and *αὔγαῖς* should stand: and *ξυανύται αὔγαῖς* should be rendered (as *ἀνύτω* with the ellipsis of *ἐδδν*) 'paces away together with the rays.' Amongst the Attic writers *ἀνύτω* and its compounds *ἐξανύτω*, *ξυανύτω*, *κατανύτω*, are generally used in this sense. In Soph. Elec. 1451. *φίλης γὰρ προξέινου κατήνυσαν* is wrongly interpreted in Stephens' Thesaurus: *κατήνυσαν* is 'have come to their journey's end.' Brunck on the passage: 'Elliptica locutio pro κατήνυσαν τὴν ἐδδν εἰς οἶκον φίλης προξέινου.'

His black branching horns have received the death
stab!

He sprawls and falls headlong! he lies in the bath,
Beside the great smouldering caldron that burns!
The caldron burns,—it has a deadly blue!

CHORUS.

No deep skill boast I in the spell of Gods;
But yet methinks all that she says bears in't
The cast of look as of some evil thing.
But when did a good or a comforting voice
E'er come from the spell of the Gods unto men?
In woe deals the craft of the long-worded lays,
And brings terror to light in the oracle song.

CASSANDRA.

Alas! alas! ah, wretch! ah, luckless fate!
Myself, myself I moan!
Wretch that I am! why hast thou brought me here,
Unless to lie beside him in his death?
Is't not? what else? what other can it be?

CHORUS.

O sure thou art one of a deep-raging soul,
Driven mad by a God, crying out
All for thyself tunes of the sad woeful lay,
Like her of dark hue, who ne'er has enough
Of her cry, in the sadness of her vexed heart,

The nightingale dark,¹ Ityn, Ityn,² who moans
All her life in the shade, deep embowered in woes.

¹ The expression in the original is ξουθὰ, 'a dark brown or yellow.' Dr. Blomfield observes that this word is applied to colours amongst the best authors, and used as an epithet for bees, birds, beasts, &c. but adduces passages where it is differently used. One is of the 'Cicala,' who is described as οὖρεσι καὶ σκιεραῖς ξουθὰ λαλεῦντα νάπαις. Yet here I cannot help thinking the word is used in the same sense; and that ξουθὰ λαλεῦντα is no more than 'chirping the chirp of the yellow insect.' In the other passage, which is adduced from Cheremon, and where this word, applied to the winds, is styled by Dr. Blomfield 'mira locutio,' I clearly think the word is used in its proper sense of colour.

Κόμαι δὲ κηροχρῶτες ὡς ἀγάλματος
Ξούθοισιν ἀνέμοις ἐνιτρύφων φερούμενοι.

In these beautiful lines I see nothing strange or wonderful; something extremely delicate, even fantastical, if you please. The poet, talking of the beauty and yellowness of those waxen tresses that dallied in the winds, says in effect, that they communicated their auburn hue to the winds that played amongst them.

² The English reader, no doubt, is aware of the story of Proene and Philomela, and Itys or Ityn, her son, for whose sad fate she, changed into a nightingale, was feigned to be ever mourning. The word 'Ityn' seems to be formed after the note of the nightingale. It would be useless to heap together the various passages of ancient and modern poets, most of which are well known, which have celebrated the sweet notes of this charming bird in as sweet poetry. One not generally quoted is to be met in Lucian's little poem on the Gout:

Καὶ νύκτερος καθ' ὕλαν
Τὸν Ἰτυν στένει δακρύοις,
Ἀτθίς γόοις ἀηδᾷ.

Hemsterhuis defends the quantity of the penultima of δακρύοις: but δακρύα, the noun, is always short, and δακρύω, the verb, long. It is very easy here to read for δακρύοις, δακρύουσ'.

CASSANDRA.

Ah, ah ! the shrill nightingale makes me to moan,
To think of her fate, so unlike to my own ;
She has groves and green trees, and she lives in the
glade
A sweet life, embowered in yon darksome shade.
She grieves not, she grieves not, though in her dark
bower ;
The sedgy brooks round her their lullabies pour !
My doom is the axe and the sharp-edged spear.

CHORUS.

Ah ! whence are these sorrows that gush from thy eyes,
As if thou wert dreaming of woe,
And the raging of God thou hast on thy mien,
With ominous cry, and the scream of affright,
All dismally chanting, and then all at once
On the notes of the clarion blowing so loud ?
Whence hast thou the spell of more than man's lore,
The ill-tiding, horrible spell ?

CASSANDRA.

O rueful, sad wedding ! wedding black as midnight,
When Paris did wed for his kinsmen's death-dole !
O Scamander ! alas ! oh, my sweet native stream !
Ah, wretch that I am ! *then* I roved by thy stream !

On thy broad beach reclining while yet I was young,
And fresh in thy bosquets I carelessly sung:
But now I am like to wander soon
By the banks of Acheron, and sing my lays
To the dank sedges of Cocytus dim!

CHORUS.

What's this thou hast oracled, horrid and clear?
A babe might e'en know it. My engorged heart
Is beaten with blood, whilst thou keep'st lament,
Moaning piteously still in thy sorrowful plight,
Making moan that astounds me to hear.

CASSANDRA.

O ye woes! O ye woes! of a city so sad,
When 'mid labours and horrors she perish'd entire!
O holy feasts, sacrifice, and blood of kine,
When my father kept festival in his old towers!
But nought did the sacrifice, gorged with the blood
Of the rich meadow-feeders, or holy feasts save
The city so sad; but she's pass'd through the storm
Of passion and suffering, e'en now as she stands,
And I my warm blood soon on earth shall pour!

CHORUS.

That strain's a sequel to the strain before.
'Tis some God who has put that bad sprite in thy mind,

With the power of a demon and strong heavy spell,
Making death-bearing outcries and horrible moan.
I am confounded, and know not the end.

CASSANDRA.

Thou'lt know it; for no longer like a bride
He'll veil his visage dim;¹ the oracle
Peeps through the mistiness, and drives the clouds
On to the eastward: blow, blow, he will come,
Rolling his woes upon the stormy beach!
And will stir up from out the troubled deep
A wave much huger 'gainst the Eastern cliff
Dashing in daylight. I shall have no more
To teach ye in enigmas; I'll speak plain.
And be ye witness whilst I snuffing blood
Run on the footsteps of things done of old.
Pale phantoms brood within yon guarded towers,
And ne'er do vanish from the spectred halls;
Screams are heard nightly, and a dismal din
Of strange, terrific, and unearthly quires,
Singing in horrid, full harmonic chord!
Like what they sing of! nothing good I ween!
And there are those, who bide within the house,
Right hard to drive such inmates out of doors,

¹ The prospect here clears up, the prophetess sees the clouds disappearing from before a clear wind, and futurity appearing more distinctly.

For, blood of mortal man since they have drank,
 Their riot more unquenchable does grow ;
 The Masque of Sisters !¹ the Erinnyes drear !
 They are all seated in the rooms above,
 Chanting how Atè came into the house²

¹ Κῶμος συγγόνων Ἐρινύων is 'a Masque of the Sister Furies.' This word has been wrongly translated 'Comus,' and the commentators on Milton, Mr. Warton and Mr. Todd, have in vain sought in this passage a prototype of Milton's Comus, unless indeed Milton misunderstood the passage, which is very possible, with Stanley and others. Κῶμος is 'a masque or band of revellers.' Dem. c. Mid. ed. Reiske, 517. Καὶ ὁ κῶμος καὶ οἱ κωμῳδοὶ, καὶ οἱ τραγωδοὶ. The first personification of Comus as a divinity I remember is in Lucian's Tragopod. Καὶ πρὸς μέλος κέραυλον, Φρυγίου κατ' ὄρεα Τρώλου Κῶμον βοῶσι Λυδοί: also in Philostratus' Icones, 3. 'Ὁ δαίμων ὁ Κῶμος παρ' οὗ τὸ κωμάζειν ἐν ἀνθρώποις, ἐβρίστηκεν ἐπὶ ταῖς τοῦ θαλάμου θύραις. Fletcher, in the Spanish Curate, has the same expression: 'A masque of all the Furies shall dance to you.'

² The crime in the family of Atreus, here alluded to, was the adultery of Thyestes with Aërope, his brother's wife, which formed the subject of Euripides' Cressæ, and is here alluded to in the line Εὐνὰς ἀδελφοῦ τῷ πατρὶντι δυσμενείῃς. Otherwise the first crime upon record of this unfortunate family was the treacherous murder of Myrtilus by Pelops, on the false accusation of his wife Hippodamia. See the story told at full length, and not much to the credit of this young Grecian princess, in Eustathius, 185. edit. Rom. The intrigue of Thyestes and Aërope is alluded to also in Eurip. Elec. 720. where it appears also that this faithless queen stole for her lover the golden lamb from his brother, which, as fable says, occasioned the phenomenon of the change of the course of the sun, supposed by some to convey, under this cloud of fable, some ancient tradition of some great changes in the heavenly bodies. However, all this tissue of horrors and crimes seems to have been unknown to Homer, who in his second book gives us to understand that Atreus and Thyestes lived in harmony together, and that Thyestes was a 'great grazier,' and does not hint at this larceny of the golden lamb, nor at the other scandal, which occasioned such a commotion in nature. Varro also, de Re Rusticâ, solves this story of the golden lamb into the general opulence

In the beginning: gloomily they look!
 Each sings the lay in catches round, each has
 Foam on her lips, and gnashes grim her teeth,
 Where heavily the incestuous brother sleeps,
 Stretch'd in pale slumber on the haunted bed.
 Ha! do the shafts fly upright at the mark?
 Fly the shafts right, or has the yew-bow miss'd?
 Methinks the wild beast in the covert's hit;
 Or rave I, dreaming of prophetic lies,
 Like some poor minstrel knocking at the doors?

of Thyestes: 'Veteres poetæ, qui ipsas pecudes propter caritatem aureas habuisse pelles tradiderunt, ut Argis Atreus quam sibi Thyesten subduxe queritur.' In a fragment of the Atreus of Accius, Atreus, probably apologizing or accounting for the cruel banquet he had served up to his brother, reverts to this theft of the golden lamb, which he represents as given him as a sort of palladium:

Addo huc quod mihi portento cœlestium pater
 Prodigium misit, regni stabilimen mei,
 Agnum inter pecudes aureâ clarum comâ,
 Quondam Thyesten clepere ausum è regiâ,
 Quâ in re adjutricem conjugem cepit sibi.

It appears from Pausanias, ii. 18. that the ram was a bearing upon Thyestes' tomb, near Argos; the same author also ascribes the crimes of the family, not to their natural depravity, but to the crime of Pelops in the murder of Myrtilus, and the evil Genius that consequently attended them. To revert, however, to the lamb, Macrobius, Sat. iii. 8. informs us, from the book called *Ostentarium Tuscum*, that a lamb, of a red or golden colour, was a happy portent, and portended wealth, dominion, and prosperity to the owner, and to this day a lamb seen in a dream portends luck.

¹ Singers in Greece went about the streets knocking at the doors, and dancing. Their music was called *Θυροκρούς* or *Κρουσθύρον*. See Meurs. Orch. Æsch. 213. Also Hes. in v. and Athen. 618.

Come, bear thou witness, out with it on oath,
That I know well the old sins of this house.

CHORUS.

How can an oath, the evil fix'd so fast,¹
Help it or cure it? But thou movest our wonder,
Bred in strange land, in city stranger-tongued,
Far beyond seas, that thou shouldst speak as if
Thou hadst been present at the scenes thou speak'st of.

CASSANDRA.

Prophet Apollo gave me this high boon.

CHORUS.

From love of thee? the God, felt he desire?

CASSANDRA.

Before this hour I fear'd for shame to tell it.

CHORUS.

Ay, for great folks are delicate and nice.

CASSANDRA.

He was a champion, vehemently breathing
The breath of love and pleasing fire upon me.

CHORUS.

Came there a marriage then 'twixt him and thee?

¹ I follow Stephens' reading *πῆμα γενέσθωσ παλιν*, and not *πῆγμα*, a conjecture of Auratus. Whichever of the two we adopt, it is clear, that these words are to be taken as the 'accusativus pendens;' for to construe them in apposition with *ἔρως*, as they commonly are, would be to obtrude an unnecessary piece of frigidity or fustian upon Æschylus.

CASSANDRA.

I said it should be, but I spoke him false.¹

CHORUS.

At *that* time wast thou of his arts possest?

CASSANDRA.

E'en so, that I was then a prophetess
Foretelling to my country all its woes!

CHORUS.

How then? And didst thou 'scape Apollo's wrath?

CASSANDRA.

For my transgression, none believed my words!²

CHORUS.

To us thy words seem worthy of belief.

CASSANDRA.

O! O! hu! hu! alas!

The pains again have seized me! my brain turns!

Hark to the alarum and prophetic cries!

The dizziness of horror swims my head!

D'ye see those yonder, sitting on the towers?

Like dreams their figures! Blood-red is their hair!

¹ All this story of Apollo's love for Cassandra, his gift to her of inspiration, and her chaste deception of him, are commonly known. Lycophron, in his *Alexandra*, makes her give the same history of it, line 350.

Ἡ τὸν θοραῖον Πτώον, Ὀρίτην Θεὸν
Λίπτοντ' ἀλέκτρων ἐκβαλοῦσα δεινίων.

² So also Lycophron:

Πίστιν γὰρ ἡμῶν Λεψιδὸς ἐνόσφισι.

Like young ones murder'd by some kinsmen false !
Horrible shadows ! with hands full of flesh !
Their bowels and their entrails they hold up,
Their own flesh, O most execrable dish !
They hold it ; out of it their father ate !
But in revenge of them there's one who plots,
A certain homebred, crouching, coward lion ;
Upon his lair the rolling lion turns,
And keeps house close, until the coming of
My master ! said I master ? Out ! alas !
I am a slave, and I must bear the yoke.
King of the ships, and sacker of great Troy,
Thou know'st not what a hateful bitch's tongue,
Glozing and fawning, sleekfaced all the while,
Will do ! like Atè stealing in the dark !
Out on such daring ! female will turn slayer
And kill the male ! What name to call her ? Snake,
Horrible monster, crested amphisbæna,
Or some dire Scylla dwelling amid rocks !
Ingulphing seamen in her howling caves !
The raving of Hell's mother fires her cheeks,
And, like a pitiless Mars, her nostrils breathe
To all around her war and trumpet's rage.
O what a shout was there ! it tore the skies,
As in the battle when the tide rolls back !

'Twas the great championess—how fierce, how fell !
 No, 'tis all joy, and welcome home, sweet lord,
 The war is o'er, the merry feast's begun.
 Well, well, ye don't believe me—'tis all one.
 For why? what will be, will be; time will come;
 Ye will be there, and pity me, and say,
 ' She was indeed too true a prophetess.'

CHORUS.

The Thyestean feast of children's flesh,
 I know it! and I shudder! Fear is on me,
 Hearing it nothing liken'd at or sketch'd,
 The very truth; but for those other things,
 I heard! and fall'n out from the course I run.

CASSANDRA.

I say thou shalt see Agamemnon's death!

CHORUS.

Hush, hush, unhappy one, lie still thy tongue.

CASSANDRA.

But Pæon does not this my word control!

CHORUS.

Not if it be; but be it not, good Gods!

CASSANDRA.

Good man, you pray; of murder are their thoughts!

CHORUS.

What man such execrable deed designs?

CASSANDRA.

The man? I pity thee; thou'rt wondrous dim,
And hast my oracles o'erlook'd indeed!

CHORUS.

I heard strange things, strange rumors, yet I heard not
The name of an assassin that I know!

CASSANDRA.

And yet I know the Greek tongue,¹ ah, too well!

¹ I have, in rendering this passage, retained *ἰστάμαι*, the reading of all the editions before Porson's. Why Markland, on Iphig. Taur. 341. should have changed it into *ἰστάσαι*, I know not, except for the purpose of weakening the sense of the first of the two lines in question, and totally destroying that of the second. To the Chorus, who says, 'I don't understand you,' Cassandra replies, 'Yet I speak your own language to you, I know it *too well*!' (This *too well* contains a fine, plaintive, melancholy reflection in her mouth.) To which the Chorus naturally replies (with the significant ellipsis contained in the particles *καὶ γὰρ*), 'Yes, yes, no question as to *your* knowledge, for you know even the Oracles; yet to *me* they are difficult to comprehend.' Now how would it stand with the other reading *ἰστάσαι*? 'Chorus. I don't understand you.' 'Cassandra. Yes you do, for *you* know Greek too well.' What cogency is there in this? For a Trojan to say to a Grecian, 'You must understand me, for you speak Greek,' is a *non sequitur*, unless the Trojan also speak Greek. Besides, why should the Chorus, being a Greek, speak Greek *too well*? In the mouth of Cassandra, applied to herself, these words have a deep, a plaintive, and melancholy allusion to her having had too much intercourse with that people, or to her ill-fated gift of languages and prophecy. As applied to the Chorus, these words have no meaning. But the second line (with the reading *ἰστάσαι* in the first) suffers still more in the sense; for thus the Chorus would reply: 'Yes, I do know Greek, for I know Oracles also; yet they are difficult.' What! would he who professed two lines before his ignorance, whose ignorance is the whole matter in question, would he say in substance, 'I

CHORUS.

Ay, and the oracles of Pythian doom;
But yet they're dark, and hard to find for me.

CASSANDRA.

O what a mighty fire comes rolling on me!
Help! help! Lycean Apollo!¹ Ah me! ah me!
She there, that two-legg'd lioness! lying with
A wolf, the highbred lion being away,
Will kill me! woeful creature that I am!
And like one busy mixing poison up,
She'll fill me such a cup² too in her ire!

don't understand you,' and then subjoin, 'for I do?' Of course, this reasoning is built on the basis, that if *ἐπίστασαι* is read in the first line, *ἐπίσταμαι* must be understood in the second, and *vice versa*. Put the passage at full length:

Κ. Καὶ μὴν ἄγαν γ' Ἑλλήν' ἐπίσταμαι φάτιν.

Χ. Καὶ (ὁρθῶς λέγεις· ἐπίστασαι) γὰρ τὰ πυθόκραντα· δυσμαθῆ δ' ὄμωρ.

¹ The reader must not confound Lycēan with Lycian, of or belonging to Lycia; Lycēan is the god of light, from the old word *λύκη*, whence the Latin 'lux': ἀμφιλύκη ὡς, in Homer: *λυκάβας*, 'a year'; or it may mean 'the wolf-god'; for it appears from Macrobius, 1 Sat. c. 17. that the sun was designated under the hieroglyph of a wolf (*λύκος*) at Lycopolis. Hence *λυκόφως* (properly speaking) 'wolf's light,' the dusk, and the French expression, 'entre chien et loup.' Porphyry remarks, that many Gods have the names of animals, derived from Egyptian hieroglyphs, among others Ἀπόλλων Λύκειος, and Διόνυσος Εἰραφιώτης; the meaning of the latter, Tan. Faber, in his letters, ingeniously illustrates, and maintains against Eustathius and Stephens.

² Clytemnestra is here described by Cassandra as brewing a mess of her motives and passions that influenced her to commit the murder of her husband. When Jamie, in the Spanish Curate, proposes to Violante respecting

She cries out, whetting all the while a sword
 'Gainst him, 'tis me, and for my bringing here
 That such a forfeit must be paid with death!
 O why then keep this mockery on my head?
 Off with ye, laurels, necklaces, and wands!
 The crown of the prophetic maiden's gone!

[*Tearing her robes.*]

Away, away! die ye ere yet I die!
 I will requite your blessings, thus, thus, thus!
 Find out some other maiden, dight her rich,
 Ay, dight her rich in miseries like me!
 And lo! Apollo! himself! tearing off
 My vest oracular! Oh! cruel God!
 Thou hast beheld me, e'en in these thy robes,
 Scoff'd at when I was with my kinsmen dear,
 And made my enemies' most piteous despite,
 And many a bad name had I for thy sake;
 A Cybele's mad-woman, beggar priestess,

Octavio: 'Let him live then, since you esteem him innocent;' she replies, 'No, Jamie, he shall make up the *mess*: now strike together.' Κάμου μισθὸν ἐνθήσει νότῳ. I cannot help suspecting that this word μισθὸν, which has perplexed the critics, and, taken in its usual acceptation, is certainly difficult to reconcile to the meaning of this passage, may be used here in a sense peculiar, and perhaps familiar at Athens, that of a *cup*, from the custom of a *cup* being given as a prize for comedy. Hesychius explains it, μισθὸν, ἀμφορία; and the old man in the 'Wasps' seems to play upon its *double* meaning, when he says:

Μηδεπότε πλοῖμ' ἀπράτου ΜΙΣΘΟΝ Ἀγαθοῦ Δαίμονος.

Despised, unheeded, beggar'd, and in hunger;
 And yet I bore it all for thy sweet sake.
 And now to fill thy cup of vengeance up,
 Prophet, thou hast undone thy prophetess!
 And led me to these passages of death!
 A block stands for the altar of my sire;¹
 It waits for me, upon its edge to die,
 Stagger'd with blows—in hot red spouting blood!
 Oh! oh! but the great Gods will hear my cries
 Shrilling for vengeance through the vaulted roofs!
 The Gods will venge us when we're dead and cold.
 Another gallant at death-deeds will come!
 Who's at the gates? a young man, fair and tall,
 A stranger, by his garb, from foreign parts;
 Or one who long since has been exiled here:
 A stripling, murderer of his mother's breast!
 Brave youth, avenger of his father's death!
 He'll come to build the high-wrought architrave,
 Surmounting all the horrors of the dome.²
 I say, the Gods have sworn that he shall come.

¹ Βωμοῦ πατρῶου ὃ ἀντ' ἐπέξηνον μένει, 'My warm blood at the altar shall be shed:' so Potter renders it. On the contrary, Æschylus contrasts the block, ἐπέξηνον, where Cassandra was to die, with the altar, βωμὸς, where her father died.

² In the original, ἄτας τάσδε θρηγκώσεων φίλοις, 'To put the cornice or capital on these family calamities.' Potter has, most unaccountably, translated it, 'by his friends fenced from these deeds of violence.' The same metaphor is used in Eur. *Herc. Fur.* Παροικηθήσας δῶμα θρηγκῶσαι κακοῖς.

His father's corse (his crest lies on the ground)
Rises, and towers before him on the road!
What mourning still? what still my eyes in tears?
And here, too, weeping on a foreign land?
I, who have seen high-towered Ilion's town
Fall, as it fell; whilst they who dwelt therein
Are, as they are! before high-judging Heaven!
I'll go and do it! I'll be bold to die!
I have a word with ye, ye gates of Hell!

[To the gates of the palace as she is about to enter.]

I pray ye, let me have a mortal stroke,
That without struggling, all this body's blood
Pouring out plenteously, in gentle stream
Of easy dying, I may close my eyes!

CHORUS.

O woeful creature, woeful, too, and wise!
O maid, thou hast been wand'ring far and wide!
But if in earnest thou dost know thy fate,
Why like a heifer, goaded by a god,
Dost thou thus fearless to the altar walk?

CASSANDRA.

Hide where I will, O strangers! run swift feet,
No feet can swifter than time's hour-glass run.

CHORUS.

Ay; but the laggard in the race of death,
He who comes last, has vantage of the time.

CASSANDRA.

My day is come! vain flight were little gain!

CHORUS.

Know then thou 'lt suffer from being over bold!

CASSANDRA.

But to die gloriously is honour's crown!

CHORUS.

None ever hears the happy speak such words!

CASSANDRA.

Oh father! oh! thou! and thy noble sons!

[Starting back.]

CHORUS.

What ails thee now? What horror makes thee start,
Running thus wildly backward?

CASSANDRA.

Foh! foh! foh!

CHORUS.

What means foh, foh? Some loathing at the heart?

CASSANDRA.

The house breathes scents of murd'rous dropping
blood!

¹ Οὐδείς ἀκούει τὰυτα τῶν εὐδαιμόνων. Stanley translates it, 'Nemo feliciū hęc audit,' when it should have been 'Nemo audit hęc ex felicibus,' or 'ex ore feliciū.' Potter has made strange work of it by his version, viz. 'None of the happy shuns his destined end;' and by his persisting, notwithstanding Heath's directions to the contrary, to put the line in the mouth of Cassandra, which should have been in that of the Chorus.

CHORUS.

How so ? 'tis smell of burning sacrifice !

CASSANDRA.

Like is the vapour as from out a tomb !

CHORUS.

A dismal character thou givest the house !

CASSANDRA.

Well, well, I'll enter, and my shrieks go with me !
E'en in these horrid domes I'll wail aloud
Myself and Agamemnon ! Farewell, life !
I've had enough of thee ! O strangers, strangers !
See, see ! I fly not, like the fluttering bird,
Behind the bush to save me ; not like her
Shunning the fowler, when I know 'tis vain.
O bear this witness to a dying woman
When the day comes that wife shall die for maid,
And man for man, that ill-starr'd husband sad !
Ye are my witnesses ! remember that !
A dying woman speaks ! remember me !

CHORUS.

Oh ! I do pity thee, unhappy maid !
For thy sad tragic and predestined fate.

CASSANDRA.

Once more ! once more ! oh let my voice be heard !
I love to sing the dirges of the dead,

My own death knell, myself my death knell ring !
 The sun rides high, but soon will set for me ;
 O sun ! I pray to thee by thy last light,
 And unto those who will me honour do,
 Upon my hateful murderers wreak the blood ¹
 Of the poor slave they murder in her chains,
 A helpless, easy, unresisting victim !
 O mortal, mortal state ! and what art thou ?
 E'en in thy glory comes the changing shade,
 And makes thee like a vision glide away !

¹ Τοῖς τ' ἑμοῖς τιμαῖροις Ἐχθροῖς φονεῦσι τοῖς ἑμοῖς τίνειν ἑμοῦ. There is a something embarrassed about this passage which strongly savours of some corruption. Dr. Blomfield has not mended it by reading τοῖ' ἑμοῖς τιμαῖρους τίνειν, because τοῖα τίνειν, or δίκην τίνειν, are phrases in use for the *punished* and not the *punisher*. It is evident the words do not cohere or construe together, which, I think, should be shown in the printing by a pause after τιμαῖροις—and after Ἐχθροῖς φονεῦσι τοῖς ἑμοῖς—. It might have been the intention of the poet, by broken sentences to describe the agitation of Cassandra, in her last speech, in the moments she knew to be her last, in the tumult of human passion, and the fury of prophetic exaltation. It might be proposed to read the passage thus :

ἤλψ' δ' ἐπαύχομαι
 Πρὸς ὕστατον φῶς, τοῖς τ' ἑμοῖς τιμαῖροις,
 Ἐχθροῖς φονεῦσι τοῖς ἑμοῖς τίνειν φόνον
 Δούλης θανάσης.

Certainly this word τίνειν has usurped the place of the rarer and more unknown word τείνειν, in *Æsch. Choeph.* 647. Τίνοι μύσος, χρόνῳ κλυτὰ βυσσόφρων Ἐρινύς, till Schutz judiciously restored τείνει, from Aldus and Robortelli. In *Eur. Hec.* 262. Εἰς τήνδ' Ἀχιλλεύς ἐνδίκως τείνει φόνον; and in the *Suppl.*

And then misfortune takes the moisten'd sponge,
And clean effaces all the picture out!¹

[*Exit CASSANDRA.*

CHORUS.

To fortune all men homage pay,
And of its worship never tire.
No one excludes the great man from his house,
Him whom the passing finger points,
And cries, 'Don't enter!² there's no room for thee!
And this our king! The Gods have blest his arms,
And given him Priam's city, whence he comes
Home with celestial honours; but if now
He is to rue the blood of olden times,
And dying, to the dead the forfeit pay—
Who of mortals would not wish,
As he hears the story told,

672. Σώζοντες· οὐδὲν δέομεναι τίνας φόβον, in which latter passage Musgrave, very unlearnedly, proposes to read *τίμην* or *τίσαι*. Should I be asked how to render in English *τίμην φόβον*, I should find it difficult to convey its precise meaning, which is something like, 'Impute it on a long account.'

¹ The same metaphor occurs in a fragment in Stob. xxii.

Κρινῶ τις αὐτὸν πάποτ' ἀνθρώπων μέγαν
Ὅν ἘΞΑΛΕΙΦΕΙ πρὸ φασίς ἡ τυχοῦς ὄλος;

² Μηκέτ' ἐσέλθης, τάδε φωνῶν. The placing of the comma in this line is very important. Dr. Blomfield has placed it wrongly after *τάδε*; but in his additional notes he adopts the proper punctuation, which is learnedly pointed out in the Monthly Review, V. 52, in a very able article on Bothe's *Æschylus*.

That his own horoscope might be
Beneath a low and harmless star?

AGAMEMNON (*within*).

O! O! within there! stabb'd! O! stabb'd to death!

FIRST CHORUS.

List! some one cries! I heard a voice cry, *stabb'd!*'

The part which the Chorus acts during this whole scene, during the murder of Agamemnon, and whilst his cries are heard, may appear to the English reader strange and pusillanimous; and the poet may by such readers be accused of caricaturing the helplessness and feebleness of old age, almost to the point of introducing a piece of burlesque in the midst of a horrid scene of tragedy. However, it may be said for our old gentlemen, that though in this crisis their deeds amount to nothing, yet their sentiments are noble, manly, and virtuous. Euripides, a professed follower of nature, has, in his *Hippolytus*, carried the conduct of the Troezenian damsels who compose his chorus, to a much higher degree of insensibility and egotism; and has certainly unnecessarily taken occasion to sport with the better feelings, and bare the selfishness of the human heart. For in that play, when the cries of Phædra are heard from behind the scenes in the agony of death (she was then hanging), to a proposal made by part of the Chorus, who call out, 'Our queen is hanging! shall we go and deliver her from the rope?' the other part of the Chorus answers their comrades very coolly, 'Tis not our place; are there not men-servants to do that service? Meddling in this life often brings us into trouble:' or in the words of Hamlet to Polonius, 'We find that to be too busy, is some danger.' No wonder such sentiments should have met with reprobation; and accordingly we find Aristotle, Poet. 28. taxing Euripides with his exhibition of unnecessary bad character in his Menelaus, in Orestes, *παράδειγμα ἥθους πονηρὰς μὴ ἀναγκαῖον*. But to return to Æschylus. In this instance he could not have done otherwise: he *could not* have made the Chorus fly to the assistance of their master; they were *not*, in fact, actors; they were *not* on the stage, but stationed on the Thymele, which they never quitted: they were, in fact, more spectators than actors, or, as it were, a middle party between both; so that in fact the representation was a play in a play. To Hamlet, who is explaining the play,

AGAMEMNON.

O! O! again! another blow! O! O!

SECOND CHORUS.

'Tis the king's voice! Ye Gods! the deed is doing!

THIRD CHORUS.

Hark! let us quickly counsel what to do.

FOURTH CHORUS.

Let's raise the town, and cry through all the streets,
Help, help, and succour to the palace gates!

Ophelia says, 'You are as good as a Chorus, my lord;' meaning thereby a go-between between the actors and spectators. The Chorus was the original and substantive part of the representation; the *getting it up* was a matter of state, and the subject of contention of the tribes, who vied with each other in the exhibition of their respective Choruses. The first persons in each tribe were appointed Choragi, and rivalled each other in the splendor and apparatus of their Choruses, who were chosen, taught, and practised for some time before the grand Lemæan and Dionysian festivals. It was a grand national exhibition of music and dancing, and the poets, properly speaking, tacked on the dialogue to heighten the pleasure, and diversify the amusement. From the splendor of the representation, and the beauty of the dresses, the dancing, and the music, associated with the finest flights of poetry, the Chorus was probably the most attractive part of the representation; though to us, stripped of all its adjuncts, it is the least interesting, and considered, in a modern play, as a useless encumbrance. Rousseau, in his remarks on the opera of *Alceste*, has some very pertinent remarks both on the dramas and the language of Greece; contending that the former were operas, and that the latter was of so musical a nature, that its mere pronunciation, when in verse, constituted music; whereas, he says, in all modern languages the association of music with words is unnatural, and hardly tolerable. Hence with us, in operas, where music prevails, sense, poetry, and dramatic interest vanish; very differently in Greece, where one heightened the pleasure of the other.

FIFTH CHORUS.

Let 's break in instantly and see what 's done,
When the fresh sword is streaming with the blood !

SIXTH CHORUS.

So say I ! something must be quickly done !
It is no time for dallying and delay !

SEVENTH CHORUS.

'Tis clear as day they mean to forge us chains :
The overture of tyranny 's begun !

EIGHTH CHORUS.

Gods ! we stand loitering here ! fie, fie, for shame !
Arm, arm, and bustle, if ye take the field.

NINTH CHORUS.

I know not what to say, or what to counsel !
He counsels best who acts upon the spot !

TENTH CHORUS.

I 'm also at like loss ! What can I do ?
I cannot raise the dead up with my cries !

ELEVENTH CHORUS.

What ! shall we yield, and drag out our existence
Beneath the sceptre of these shameful princes ?

TWELFTH CHORUS.

'Tis not endurable ! 'tis best to die !
Death is more sweet than tyranny to taste !

THIRTEENTH CHORUS.

But are we clear that murder has been done ?
What proof besides the groaning that we heard ?

FOURTEENTH CHORUS.

We should know well before we speak on't thus.
To know is one thing, and to guess, another!

FIFTEENTH CHORUS.

You're right! you're right! for certain let us know
What has fallen out, and how Atrides is.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLYTEMNESTRA. .

Of much before fair spoken for the time
 To speak the contrary, I will not blush.
 How could I otherwise? For who would not,
 Plotting in deep revenges hate 'gainst hate,
 Though yet in seeming they may still be friends,
 Would not the net of his destruction bar
 So high, that out of it 't were vain to leap?
 And this great championship has been to me
 A matter of much musing from of old,
 From an old feud, and has come forth in time,
 Though long delay'd!—These hands have struck the
 blow!

¹ Thus have I translated in three lines, without adding a single idea, the single line, "Εσθηκα δ' ἐνθ' ἵπαισ' ἐν' ἐξυργασμένοις. It is a beautiful line, pregnant and full of meaning, but has been sadly misinterpreted; and even Dr. Blomfield, who has restored the text, after Schutz, by reading ἵπαισ' for ἵπαις, seems not to have understood it, by proposing to remove it from its present place. Potter evidently grossly mistranslated it: 'Often have I stood to assay the execution where he fell;' as if ἵσθηκα were ἵστην, and as if ἐν' ἐξυργασμένοις bore a totally different sense from what it does. Casaubon also has made a miserable version, viz. 'Constitui Agamemnonem prope ea quæ in hanc rem paraveram, ubi à me cæsus est,' thereby rendering ἐν' ἐξυργασμένοις 'prope ea quæ paraveram,' instead of its uniform meaning, 'res peracta est,' or 're peractâ.' One of the causes of the misunderstanding this line is its brevity, and its interruptions; and the critics have not observed

'Tis like the deeds that have been done of yore !
Past! and my feet are now upon the spot !
 And so I did it, and I'll not deny it,
 That fly he could not, nor himself defend !
 A net without an outlet, as it were
 A drag for fishes, round about I staked,
 An evil garment ! yet all richly wrought !
 I smote him twice : after two groans his limbs
 Sunk under him, and then upon the ground
 I clove at him again with a third blow,
 To quit my vow to Hades under ground,
 Warden of dead men in the pale blue lake !
 Thus falling, his own life he renders up,
 Sighing and sobbing such a mighty gush,
 Which spouted from his streaming wounds amain,¹

that it is a soliloquy, and not part of the narrative. Clytemnestra advances on the stage, firm in resolution, yet full of horror at the deed she had been committing, partly soliloquizing, partly addressing the Chorus. The line in question is a soliloquy, broken, interrupted, with long intervening pauses, and should not be printed as if it were in the plain continuity of narrative, but, "Ἐσθηκα δ' ἐνθ' ἴκαιο'—ἐπ' ἐξαιργασμένοις—".

¹ In the original, Κάκφυσιων ὀξείαν αἵματος σφαγὴν βάλλας μ' ἱραμνῇ Ψανάδι φοινίᾳ δρόσου. I believe that in this passage the poet meant nothing more than to describe the forcible rush of blood from the stabs; and that βάλλας is only a very powerful metaphor, and not to be taken literally, as if Agamemnon in his last moments actually threw his blood on his inhuman wife: the passage is horrid enough without that. But see even that horror described, in a most heart-rending passage of Apollonius Rhodius, iv. 472, where the young Absyrtus is treacherously decoyed into an ambushade by his wicked sister, Medea; in the midst of the conversation of the brother

That he cast on me the black bloody drops,
 In that black dew rejoicing, as the seeds
 Joy at the coming of the heaven-sent shower
 Raining upon them, in the blowing hour,
 When the sweet blossoms glow with purple birth.
 This being e'en so, ye prime of Argive men,
 Rejoice ye, if rejoicing be your mood.
 I am so full of joy, that if 't were seemly
 To pour libations on a corpse, I wou'd do it;
 And just it were, ay, most exceeding just.
 With such accursed potions he who here
 Has fill'd a chalice, drinks it off himself!

CHORUS.

Amazement! that a woman should thus speak!
 What horrid boldness! o'er her husband's corse!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ye try me like a woman weak in mind.
 My heart shakes not, my tongue proclaims the deed.
 And thou, or praise, or blame me, as thou wilt,
 'Tis one to me! He there is Agamemnon,

and sister, Jason starts from his concealment and murders him; the young man, stabbed and bleeding to death, holds his hands to catch the gushing blood, and throws it on his sister's white veil, who was standing by, with her head turned away.

λοίσθια δ' ἤρως .

Θυμὸν ἀποπνέων χερσὶν μέλαν ἀμφοτέρῃσιν
 Αἷμα κατ' ὤτειλ' ἢν ὑποσχομένο τῇσδε καλὴν
 Ἀργυφέναν καὶ πέπλο ἀλευρομένην ῥέθμην.

My spouse, a corpse! this right hand did the work,
A righteous handicraftsman! Even so!

CHORUS.

What evil thing, O woman! hast thou ate
Eatable, nursed upon earth's venom'd lap,
Or potable, from out the hoary sea,
That thou hast put this sacrifice to burn
Amidst the curses of the tongues of men?
Thou hast cast him from thee, thou hast cut him off,
Thou 'lt be cast off thyself!
A mighty hate unto thy country's men!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Now ye do doom me from this city flight .
And hatred, and to have the tongues of men
In curses on me; but to this man then,
No, not one word in pity didst thou speak,
Who thought no more his tender child to spare
Than a young lamb from fleecy pastures torn
From out the midst of his unnumber'd sheep,
His child, and mine! the dearest of my womb!
When he her blood a drear enchantment pour'd
To lull the howlings of the Thracian blasts!
Was n't that a man to drive out from the gates
To expiate pollutions? But to me,
Sitting in audience of my deeds, thou art
A harsh judge! But I say this unto thee!

'Threaten away, for I too am prepared
 In the like manner—rule me, if thou canst
 Get by thy hand the mastery—rule me then—
 But if the contrary be the doom of God,
 I'll teach ye lessons for graybeards to learn.

CHORUS.

Outrageous is thy speech,
 And mighty-minded are thy thoughts ;
 And thy soul is maddening yet
 As on the gore drops fresh and wet !
 A drop upon thy eyes does show
 Of unavenged blood.¹
 The time will come, when left alone,
 Thou 'lt wring thy hands, and vainly moan
 Thy friends away, thy murderers by,
 Thou wilt pay blow for blow.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

And thou shalt hear my just and solemn oath !

¹ In this passage I have followed the excellent reading and punctuation of Dr. Blomfield's edition.

² From the corrupt reading of Stephens, *εὐπρέπειαν τίς τόν*, Canter has made *εὐπρέπει ἀτίστον*; Schutz, adhering still closer to the letters, *οὐ πρέπει ἀτίστον*. The reader will see I have followed the former. This word seems strangely used in Ion. 701. *πίσις δ' ἀτίστος φίλων*: indeed it is unceremoniously ejected by Barnes, who, 'pro more suo,' introduces *ἀκόρητος* into the text.

By the full vengeance taken for my child,¹
 By Atè and Erinnyes, at whose shrines
 I've slain this man, a bloody sacrifice,
 I think not in the House of Fear to walk,²
 Whilst on my hearth Ægisthus burneth fire,
 As he is wont, his heart still true to mine :
 For he's my boldness, and no little shield.
 Low lies the man who did me deadly wrong ;
 Low lies the minion of Troy's fair Chryseids :
 And she his captive, and his soothsayer,
 His paramour, his lovely prophetess,
 She whom he trusted, true to him in bed,
 And, on the naval gallies as she rode.
 Not unrequited, what these two have done !
 For he e'en so ; and she most like a swan³

¹ Μὰ τὴν τέλειον τῆς ἐμῆς παιδὸς Δίκην.

Dicè was a goddess, see Clem. Alex. Protr. 12. which I note to excuse myself for having throughout used the name of this personification of justice, not familiar to English ears. No apology is needed for Atè, nor Erinnyes, their names being familiarized to English ears by our immortal Shakspeare :

Jul. Cæsar. And Cæsar's spirit ranging for revenge,

With Atè by his side, come hot from Hell.

² ' House of Fear ; ' a mode of expression common in our English writers. House of Ignorance occurs in Fletcher's Spanish Curate, when Bartolo, not being able to find entrance into his own house, exclaims, Act 4. S. 6.

' I'll make ye hear : the house of Ignorance,
 No sound inhabits here.'

³ On the song of swans, see a beautiful passage in the Phædon of Plato, where the philosopher controverts the common notion of the song of swans

Kept singing still her last song in the world,
 A deadly, wailing, melancholy strain :
 Now on the earth she lies, stretch'd out in blood,
 And her dishevell'd tresses sweep the ground :
 Cold sweats of death sit on her marble face ;
 His love ! his beauty ! 'Twas to me he brought
 This piece of daintiness to cheat my bed !

SEMICHORUS.

Oh ! for some sudden Fate on downy wing,
 Without or pain, or sick-bed¹ moan,
 Wafting with her a deep sleep,
 A sleep that ne'er will end,
 Now my gracious monarch's dead,
 Now my friend and guardian's sped.

being a dirge ; and maintains, that the song of all birds, the nightingale amongst others, is indicative of happiness. This may be very true, but it is vastly unpoetical ! Poetry cannot divest itself of the mournful song of the nightingale in a dark grove. See, in Apoll. Rhod. iv. a most beautiful description of the wailing of Medea and her damsels, all night long, on the desert sands of Libya, stranded and forlorn, compared to the mournful song of the swans in the dewy meadows of Pactolus :

Ὀς δ' ἐπὶ καλὰ νάουτος ἐπ' ὄφρυσι Παντῶν
 ἔδκνοι κινήσωσιν ἰὼν μέλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λειμῶν
 Ἐρσῆεις βρέμνται ποταμοῖο τε καλὰ ρέεθρα.
 Ὀς αἱ ἐπὶ ξανθὰς θέμναι κοίησιν ἰθείρας
 Παννύχαι ἱλαῖνδ' ἰγλεμον ᾠδέρουτο.

¹ The word *δειμιότηρης* here, as noted above, is applied to one who keeps his bed, not to one who watches it.

Woman was his deadly bane;
 Woman caused him toil and pain;
 Woman took his life away:
 Alas! alas! the rueful day.

CHORUS.

O Helen, Helen! frantic queen!
 Thou hast slain full many a knight
 Under Troy walls in bloody fight;
 Full many and many a knight.

SEMICHORUS.

And now thou hast,
 With dreary blast,
 Nipt this flower of peerless ray?
 The blood that flows
 From that sweet rose
 Will never wash away!
 Discord high¹
 Built to the sky,

¹ So I have rendered *ἰσθματός*, 'strongly built,' and not 'very noxious,' as Dr. Blomfield and Stanley: *ἰσθματός* follows the analogy of *εὐδματος* and *θεῖδματος*. Coupled with *Ἔρις*, it may be called a strong metaphor, but not stronger than *νέκτων τέκτονα*, or *ἄτας θρυγῶσαν*, in this play, or *καλλίπυρον σοφίαν*, Ar. Nub. 1024. Fletcher's Spanish Curate, A. 5. S. 3. has something of the same figure softened:

'Whom she prick'd forth to be the instrument
 Of her most bloody building.'

Was that queen
Of beauteous mien :
Hateful strife, and baleful stower,
Lodg'd within her palace bower.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Take it not thus in bitterness of heart,
Nor pray for death, disconsolate old man !
Nor turn thy wrath 'gainst Helen, that she was
A man-destroyer ; and that she alone
So many souls of mighty heroes slew,
And was the source of many a direful woe !

SEMICHORUS.

O thou demon ! who dost fall¹
On the high Tantalid hall ;
Ha ! I know thee, mighty fiend !
Who here dost ever wend ;
Haunting down the double line
From father eke to son !
'Tis thou hast made soft bosoms swell
With thy horrid deadly spell
On these sisters, fierce and fell !
Upon the body, to my eyes

¹ Alluding to the demon who was supposed to haunt the house of Tantalus.

Like a black raven¹ standing, she
Joys to scream her horrid hymn!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ay, now thy words have sense and grace!
Calling on that thrice-great fiend,
The Demon of this race:
For 'tis from Him their bowels burn
With rage of lapping blood;
Ere the old grief has ceased to throb,
Young gore comes on amain!²

SEMICHORUS.

What name the demon, name the fiend?

¹ The Chorus here assimilates Clytemnestra to a raven over the dead. This bird, so great a favourite of the Celtic bards, seldom occurs to the less gloomy imaginations of the Greeks. The screaming of the ravens over the dead, is a favourite image in the old Welsh poetry; as for instance in *Gwalchmai*: 'Mi wn yn y lle y llas Gwendolau Mab Ceidiau colofyn cerddhau, Ban ryercynt brain yr grau.' That is: 'I know in the place where Gwendolau was slain, The son of Ceidiau, the pillar of songs, Loud did the ravens scream for blood.'

² Νέος ἰχώρ. 'Ichor' has two senses, a prosaic and a poetic. Clemens Alexandrinus, more of a theologian than a poet, very unpoetically criticises this word. *Protr.* 12. Οἱ δὲ ἰχώρες οἱ ποιητικοὶ εἰδεχθέντες αἱμάτων σῆψας γὰρ αἵματος ὁ ἰχώρ νοῖται. This is its sense in Hippocrates and medical writers; but not so in Homer's immortal ichor, ὁσπερ τε βίη μακάρεσσιν θεοῖσιν, nor in this passage where the epithet νέος designates its usage. *Eur. Ion.* 1016. uses it for a medicament, or liquor in general.

Εἰς τὸ δὲ κραθὲν ταυτὸν ἰχώρας φέρου;

Lucian. *Tragopod.* 18. for the humour of the gout:

Ἰχώρι φάλην καὶ πικρῷ χυμῷ χολῆς.

Cursed genius of this house !
 He whose anger works us woe,
 Horrid demon ! oh ! oh ! oh !
 If the demon do here fly,
 'Tis Jove's pleasure that he come,
 Jove, who rules all from the sky,
 Jove, the arbiter of doom,
 Maker of all things, cause of all :
 Whatever chance or ill befall,
 All that's done on the breathing earth
 Has from the doom of God its birth.

CHORUS.

Alas ! Alas !

My king, my king, dead, cold, and pale !
 How shall I fondly o'er thee wail ?
 The spider's web has closed thee round,
 In death's iron slumber bound :
 Ha, ha ! thou breathest thy life away,
 Gallant hart, at thy last bay.

SEMICHORUS.

Ah me ! Ah me !

To see thee stretch'd upon that bed
 Not like a monarch, lying dead !
 By false hand and deadly blow
 Of steel axe wast thou laid low.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Thou makest an outcry here as though
 The deed were mine! Gramercy, 'twas not I:
 It was the Alastor¹ old, I ween, 1
 I saw him like the deadman's queen!
 I saw him pass with lightsome speed,
 All in horrid ecstasy,
 From the ancient hall of blood,
 Where old Atreus erst did feast;
 He vengeance² took upon the feaster's son,
 And o'er the little children slew the man.

SEMICHORUS.

That thou art blameless, who will be
 Witness for thee? none I fear!
 O queen! O queen! how can it be?
 The Alastor, ay, he might be there,³
 And aid thee with his demon might.

¹ Alastor is the evil Genius supposed to haunt the house of Atreus. Clem. Alexan. Protr. 12. 'Εντιῦθι δὲ Ἑρηνῶς καὶ Εὐμύνδας καὶ ταλαμνῶς τινὰς καὶ προστροπαίους ἔτι δὲ Ἀλάστορας ἀναπέπλακασιν οἱ ἀμφὶ σκητὴν ποιητάδ. Xenarchus ap. Athen. 11. humorously introduces this Alastor: Τύχαις, Ἀλάστωρ δ' εἰσπέπαικε Πελοπιδῶν Ἀστυτάδ.

² If this reading, ἀπίτιςιν, is genuine, it is, I believe, a singular instance of such usage, and the only passage in the Greek tragedians where the active form of the verb ἀποτίνω occurs in the sense of *taking* revenge.

³ Potter has egregiously mistaken this passage, rendering it 'From the father in the cause rise an avenger,' as if Ἀλάστωρ were an *avenger*, and γίνοιτ' ἄν were γένοιτο.

The black-faced God of murder swells,
 Borne on the torrents of this kindred blood;¹
 With force impetuous as he drives along,
 And wades so deep as he proceeds
 To where he'll make that ruthless soul,²
 E'en him, the child-devourer, freeze
 With horror at the sight.

CHORUS.

Alas! Alas!

My king, my king, dead, cold, and pale!
 How shall I fondly o'er thee wail?

¹ In the play of the Prophetess is something of a similar image. Dioclesian speaks:

Take heed, my kinsman,
 Ungratefulness and blood mingled together,
 Will' like two furious tides——

Max. I must still through them;

Let them be tides of death, sir, I must stem them.

² In the Greek *ὅποι δὲ καὶ προβαίνων Πάχνα κευροβόρῃ παρέξει*. I merely read *πάχνα* for *πάχνα*, with Heath, Pauw, Bothe, and Casaubon, and have translated accordingly. Of Hermannus' *πάχνα* I can make nothing. Schutz's interpretation is no doubt the obvious and natural one, '*frigus nativoro incutiet.*' *Πάχνα* is metaphorical here, as *Παχνομένη* in the Choeph. 80. as well as *παχνοῦται ἦτορ* in Homer, and *ἐπαχνοσε φίλον ἦτορ* in Hesiod, and in Eur. Hipp. 803. *Λόπη παχνοθεῖσ' ἢ π' συμφορᾷ τινι*; Eustathius on the above line of Homer; *δηλοῖ δὲ τὸ παχνοῦται ὅλον καὶ πηγνυται τῇ λύπῃ καὶ ἄλλως παχνοῦται ἀντὶ τοῦ ψύχεται*. *Ψυχρὰ γὰρ τὰ ἀηδὴ ἐκάλεον οἱ παλαιοί*. Compare Xen. Oecon. 18. ed. Bachii. *πυγμὸν παρέξει*. It is impossible to say what idea Potter conceived of the passage from his version, which is entirely foreign from it, 'And points the ruthless boy to deeds of horror.' The 'child-devourer' I understand as meaning Atreus.

The spider's web has closed thee round,
 In death's iron slumber bound :
 Ha, ha ! thou breathest thy life away,
 Gallant hart, at thy last bay.

SEMICHORUS.

Ah me ! Ah me !
 To see thee stretch'd upon that bed,
 Not like a monarch lying dead !
 By false hand and deadly blow
 Of steel axe wast thou laid low.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

No, no, not so ; nor falsely was he slain !
 Laid not he first dire Atë's snares ¹
 In his own house ? But after what he did
 To my sweet flower, that bloom'd from him and me,
 Iphigenia, ² mourn'd for many a day,

¹ In the Greek Οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος δόλῳ ἄταν Οἴκῳ σου ἔθην' ; Schutz first put the mark of interrogation after ἔθην' : optimè, in my opinion, both as to the sense and the language : for as to the first, it would be absurd to make Clytemnestra say her husband had *not* acted treacherously by her in kidnapping Iphigenia, which is her constant charge against him ; and as to the second, surely the words οὐδὲ γὰρ οὗτος ἔθηνε are the words of a questioner, and not an affirmer.

² It appears by the accounts of some writers, Euripides and Pausanias, that Clytemnestra was a widow when Agamemnon married her, after having barbarously murdered her first husband, the younger Tantalus. Homer, however, expressly says the contrary (Κλυταίμνηστρης Κουριδῆς ἀλόχου), and Æschylus' silence is equally expressive. It would not have served his pur-

After his foul, unworthy deed,
 After his fair and worthy recompense,
 Let him not there in hell complain :
 He fell upon the sword, as with the sword he slew.

SEMICHORUS.

A lazy horror creeps upon my flesh,
 My soul is like a desert, wild and blank ;
 Where shall I turn or find my way,
 Left lone amidst this ruin'd house ?
 Hark ! hark ! the light drops fly before the wind !
 The storm is up, and yells in every blast !
 The vaulted sky comes down in rain of blood !
 Shake, shake the battlements—the high towers roar !
 Hark ! how the hinges creak on every door !
 Dicæ ranges the dark walls,
 And Moera in the blood-stain'd halls
 Turns the groaning whetstone round ;
 Other daggers strew the ground.

pose, conceiving the character of Agamemnon as he has done in this play, to have made him the perpetrator of so great a barbarity.

Our poet has equally followed Homer in making Iphigenia the daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and not Helen's daughter by Theseus, adopted and brought up by Clytemnestra, as it appears Euphorion of Chalcis, and Stesichorus did, according to Pausanias, ii. c. 22. and such it appears from him was the report of the country of Argos. Καὶ ἐπὶ τῷδε Εὐφορίων χαλκιδεὺς καὶ Πλευρόνιος Ἀλέξανδρος ἔπη ποιήσαντες πρότερον δι' ἑτὶ ΣτΗΣΙΧΟΡΟΣ δ' Ἰμεραῖος κατὰ ταῦτα φασὶν Ἀργείοις Θησέως εἶναι θυγατέρα Ἰφίγένειαν.

CHORUS.

O Earth! O Earth!

Why didst not ope thy monumental jaws,
 And take me to thy ever-during caves
 Before I had seen him on that lowly bed,¹
 In that coffin silver-wall'd?
 And who will bury him, and who will mourn?
 And canst thou dare to go unto his grave,
 Thy red hands dropping on his murder'd shroud,
 And o'er his parting soul bewail aloud?
 Ah! those sweet tears that kindly mourners shed,
 And their fond wails, the pleasures of the dead,
 From thee, dire murderess of his gory head,
 Would but torment him in his lowly bed.

SEMICHORUS.

Who o'er this godlike man
 Shall speak the funeral praise,
 With tears that stream upon his grave,
 And heart-felt sorrow true?

¹ Lucian, Περὶ Ὀῦου, describes a painting which exhibited Clytemnestra lying murdered and half naked on a couch, as Agamemnon is here. This was in a back part of the picture, whilst in the foreground the two young men, Orestes and Pylades, were in the act of putting Ægisthus to death. Lucian goes on to say that the subject was taken from Sophocles or Euripides, for that both represented a *similar* picture. We certainly have this subject in the *Electra* of Sophocles, but not in that of Euripides, where the death of Ægisthus takes place before that of his wife, and in a different spot.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Speak not of that; 'tis no concern of thine :
 That is for us : by us he fell, he died ;
 And we will be his buryers, not with tears,
 Nor with loud wailings issuing from these walls ;
 But she, who should, his child Iphigenia,
 At her father's coming blithe,
 Shall meet him on the brink
 Of the river of Woe, fast fleeting by,
 And her two hands around him cast,
 And kiss him with her spectre lips.

SEMICHORUS.

Thy mouth still stern defiance breathes,
 And for reproach hurls back reproach !
 These are hard matters for a man to judge !
 The havocker meets havoc in his turn,
 And he who murders pays in full.
 'Tis writ above, in adamantine reed,¹
 Which aye endures while Jove through time endures,
 ' Doer must suffer !' 'Tis the Law !
 Who'll break the spell, and drive out from these walls

¹ Μίμνει δὲ μένοντος ἐν χρόνῳ Διὸς Παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα. Θείσμων γὰρ. Τίς ἀν γονὰν ἀραῖον ἐκβάλοι δέμων ; 'Αραῖον is the excellent emendation of Hermannus for βᾶον. A full stop should unquestionably be put after Θείσμων γὰρ. (which has no stop after it in any of the editions), for those words evidently relate to what goes *before*, and not what follows *after*.

The dreary, long, perpetuated curse?
The race is tied to misery for aye.¹

CHORUS.

O Earth! O Earth!

Why didst not ope thy monumental jaws,
And take me to thy ever-during caves
Before I had seen him on that lowly bed,
In that coffin silver-wall'd!
And who will bury him, and who will mourn?
And wilt thou dare to go unto his grave,
And o'er his parting soul bewail aloud,
Thy red hands dropping on his bloodstain'd shroud?
Thou, his murderess and his wife,
A horrible, ungracious grace,
After a horrible and mighty work,
Unholily to do!

SEMICHORUS.

Who o'er this godlike man
Shall speak the funeral praise,
With tears that stream upon his grave,
And heartfelt sorrow true?

¹ I have followed in this passage the excellent reading of Dr. Blomfield, who has restored it by the transposition of one stroke, reading ΤΙΡΟΣΑΤΑΙ for ΤΙΡΟΣΑ-ΑΙ, or in the common Greek character, *τιρσαται*.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ay, all the oracles of God,
Writ in words that ne'er will fade,
Have lit indeed upon this wretched man!
But I meanwhile am ready now
To make a covenant's solemn vow
With the great fiend of the Pleisthenid sons,
To swear unto that demon great,
If he will swear to me,
I to rest here, and be content with this,
All piteous as it is;
If he on his part from this house will fly,
And seek some other race,
On which to wreak his direful rage,
In deaths and kindred murders foul,
Avaunt this palace, and the gold
Which its ancient towers enfold.
A pittance small is all I seek,
Could I this horrid death-spell break,
And drive away the murderous rage
Which here has fester'd age to age.

Enter ÆGISTHUS.

ÆGISTHUS.

The sun looks bright on this avenging day,
The Gods above live in yon sapphire vault,
And their eyes see the reeking crimes of earth;
I know it now, by token of that robe,
The garment of the Furies, and the man
Who lies within it; joyful, joyful sight!
The day of reckoning now is come at last,
And his old father's wickedness he rues!
'Tis a short story: Atreus once was king,
And ruled this country; he was this man's sire:
He had a brother too, who was my sire,
His name the wretched, sad, much-wrong'd Thyestes.
They fell into dispute about the power,
And Atreus drove him from this house and land.
But poor Thyestes home again return'd,
And sat a suppliant at the sacred hearth.
So far 'twas safe; he found his safety there,
Himself, and bled not in his father's house;
But impious Atreus did not brook it so,
But gave a mighty festival, all joy

And festal sacrifice (for so it seem'd),
 And seeming reconciliation to my sire :
 But at the feast was served up to him flesh
 Of his own children, murder'd privily.
 'Twas so contrived that they who sat at board
 Could not behold the feet and finger joints,
 Which lay apart, all covered with a dish :¹
 The rest was served an undistinguish'd mass.
 My father freely at the banquet ate !
 And here thou seest the fruit of that sad dish,
 Which like a curse upon our race endures.
 But he, when he found out the unnatural deed,
 And saw those hands and feet held up before him,
 He shriek'd, and backward falls upon the floor,
 In horrid vomit of that bloody feast :
 And calls down on the heads of Pelops' sons
 A curse beyond the endurance of the race.
 (Table and banquet spurning in his curse),
 So perish all the race of Pleisthenes.
 These curses now are come ; behold this man,
 Weltering in death, and I, his murderer, by,
 Say, rather, righteous executioner.
 I have my wrongs too, like my wretched sire,

¹ "Ἐθρυπτ' ἄνωθεν. In a difficult passage I have adopted *ἐθρυπτον, ἀνωθεν,*
 and *καθημένους*, from Schutz and Blomfield.

For I was with him when he took to flight,
 And all his children follow'd at his back,
 Thirteen in number. I, the youngest, was
 Then in my swaddling clothes, a child in arms,
 Not conscious of the horrors of that day;
 But I grew up, and Dicè rear'd my head,
 And brought me home: though exiled, I was near,
 Revolving curiously each means of death,
 And all the phantoms of the assassin's soul;
 And I have gall'd him: now, if it is my fate,
 Why, let me die: I cannot fall disgraced,
 Now I have seen him wrapt in Dicè's toils.

CHORUS.

Ægisthus, impious I do deem the mood
 Of wanton merriment in midst of woes.¹
 That thou hast slain him wilfully, thou say'st,
 And vauntest thy assassinating plot?
 Sure as thou livest, I say, thou shalt not 'scape
 The volleys of the people, stony showers,
 And their just curses, hurled at thy head.

¹ I have so rendered the common reading ἐν κακοῖσιν. Porson read καμῶσιν very ingeniously, ably, and probably. Dr. Blomfield's objection that ἐβρῶσιν εἰς is proper, but not ἐβρῶσιν ἐν, is, I think, answered by v. 1092, ed. Brunck, Soph. Aj. Εἴτ' αὐτὸς ἐν θανοῦσιν ἑβριστῆς γένη. See Pors. Adv. 196. But the common reading is supported by Soph. Aj. 1118, ed. Brunck. Οὐδ' αὖ τοιαύτην γλῶσσαν ἐν κακοῖς φιλῶ.

ÆGISTHUS.

Thus speak'st thou sitting at the lower oar,
 Whilst those above the ship-mast bear the sway?
 Thou art an old man, yet thou shalt be taught,
 And at thy age 'tis grievous to be task'd,
 To keep a sober tongue within thy head.¹
 Mind! rattling chains and dungeon-keep below,
 And the spare diet in the jailor's cage,
 Are excellent physicians for proud spleen!
 Is there no speculation in their orbs?
 Or do thy eyes this spectacle behold?
 Kick not against the pricks, for fear thou hurt thy
 feet.

CHORUS.

O woman! and couldst thou for this thy lord,
 Fresh come from battle, thou his house's ward
 His bed dishonouring, couldst thou for him,
 Leader of armies, such a fate devise?

ÆGISTHUS.

He who speaks thus must rue it! woe betide him!
 Plague on thy din! no music tunes thy voice;

¹ Τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον. A very able critic (Mr. Elmsley on the *Heraclidae*) has introduced the reading *κεχηρμένον*. Should it not then be *κεχηρμένῳ*? But I join with Dr. Blomfield in doubting whether either should be read in this passage. I consider *σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον* as the genuine reading, and render it 'to be discreet in what thou sayest.'

Thou hast not learnt in the Orphean school :
Orpheus had lullabies and opiate songs
To soothe the savage, make the wild trees dance,
And all around was harmony and joy.
But thou wouldst make the gentlest splenetic
By thy loud barking and incessant din.
Forth from our presence we will have thee dragg'd,
And we shall see thee quieter ere long.

CHORUS.

Shalt thou be King of Argos? thou forsooth,
Who hadst the villany to plot his death,
Yet not the courage with thy hand to strike?

ÆGISTHUS.

Why, you dull fool, 'twas stratagem and guile!
And who so fit as woman for a plot?
'Twould have marr'd all had I but shown my face;
I must have been suspected as his foe,
His ancient, old, hereditary foe.
But now 'tis done, and I am at my ease!
I'll take his treasures, and I'll mount his throne,
And do my best the citizens to rule:
The disobedient and unruly steed,
O'erfed and pamper'd, with strong bits I'll curb,
And clap my heaviest yoke upon their neck:
Or, to speak plainer, chains and dungeon-keep.

And famine in the darkest castle vault,
Shall make the tiger like the unwean'd lamb!

CHORUS.

False as thou art, and coward at the heart,
Why didst thou not thyself like man meet man,
And slaughter him thyself? Thou durst it not!
No! but the weak hands of a woman fell
Murder'd him horribly! O bane of women!
O horrible confusion of the land,
And dire pollution of the country Gods!
O for Orestes! where is he, brave youth?
Views he the sun's light somewhere, that he may,
Guided by buoyant fortune, here return
The all-strong slayer of these bloody two?

ÆGISTHUS.

But if ye are determined on this mood,
Thou shalt soon feel——

CHORUS.

Help, fellow soldiers, help!
The foe approaches! close up rear and van!

ÆGISTHUS.

* * * * *

CHORUS.

Come each man ready hand upon his sword!

ÆGISTHUS.

My hand too on my trusty sword is grasp'd,
And ready for the combat e'en to death!

CHORUS.

Hail to thy words, and die as thou hast said!
Now for the fate and fortune of the day!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Stay, stay, dearest Ægisthus! stay thy hands!
Let's not do further harm! behold here lies
A wretched harvest which we have to reap!
We have had enough of woe! Let's not be bloody!
But go, old men, repair unto your homes¹
Before aught happens! 'twas the time and fate
That made us act e'en so as we have acted;
But with the deed sufficient has been done!
And we are plunged, alas! full deep in woe,
Struck by the Demon in his horrid rage.
Slight not my counsel, though a woman speaks.

ÆGISTHUS.

But that these men should froth their idle tongues,
And utter such bold language, tempting fate,

¹ In the original it is δόμους πεπρωμένους, 'your fated homes,' which I do not understand. Can the word πεπρωμένους have occupied the place of τετρωμένους, and should it be read Στελεχέτ' εἰ γέροντες ἤδη πρὸς δόμους, τετρωμένους Πρὸς παθεῖν, that is, 'before you receive a hurt or wound?'

And wander wide of temper and discretion,
And beard the ruler——

CHORUS.

'Tis not for Argives to bow down the knee,
And basely fawn upon a man of guilt!

ÆGISTHUS.

Well, the day 'll come when I shall have thee yet.

CHORUS.

Not if kind Gods will send Orestes here!

ÆGISTHUS.

'Tis an old story that—the hopes of exiles:
Poor wretches! hope is all their meagre feast!'

CHORUS.

Go on! disport thee in thy wanton mood!
Get bloat² in horrid smear'd iniquity!
Thy star is in the ascendant! work thy will!

¹ Ἑλπίδας σιτουμένους. Eubulus ap. Athen. ii. 47. humorously sends Zethus, having a good appetite, to Thebes, where bread was cheap; but as to the musical Amphion, says he, let him go to the celebrated Athens, where the Athenians *starve* with the best grace imaginable, swallowing air, and feeding on hope:

Ὁ δὲ ῥῆσ' ἀεὶ πεινώσι Κεκροπιδῶν κέροι
Κάπτοντες αἶρα Ἑλπίδας σιτούμενοι.

So Hamlet, of the camelion's dish:

I eat air: you cannot feed capons so.

² Πιάλου. So Shakspeare in Hamlet:

Ham. Let the *bloat* king tempt thee again to bed.

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